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General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

3rd plenary meeting
Wednesday, 23 September 2009, 9 a.m.
New York

President: Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m.

Agenda item 107

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/64/1)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the decision taken at its 2nd plenary meeting, held on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report on the work of the Organization, under agenda item 107. I give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in French*): I should like to sincerely congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of your duties. I wish you every success and assure you of my support.

(*spoke in English*)

We gather each and every September in a solemn rite. We come to reaffirm our founding Charter and our faith in the fundamental principles of peace, justice and human rights and equal opportunity for all. We assess the state of the world, engage on the key issues of the day and lay out our vision for the way ahead. This year, the opening of the general debate of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly asks us to rise to an exceptional moment. Amid many crises — food, energy, recession and pandemic flu — hitting all at once, the world looks to us for answers. If ever there were a time to act in a spirit of renewed multilateralism, a moment to create a United Nations of genuine collective action, it is now.

Now is our time — a time to put the "united" back into the United Nations: united in purpose, united in action. First, let us make this the year that we, the United Nations, rise to the greatest challenge we face as a human family — the threat of catastrophic climate change. Yesterday, 100 heads of State and Government set out the next steps towards Copenhagen. They recognized the need for an agreement all nations can embrace, in line with their capabilities, consistent with what science requires and grounded in green jobs and green growth, the lifeline of the twenty-first century. Our road to Copenhagen requires us to bridge our differences. I firmly believe we can.

Secondly, let this be the year that nations unite to free our world of nuclear weapons. For too long, this great cause has laid dormant. That is why, last October, I proposed a five-point plan for putting disarmament back on the global agenda. And now the international climate is changing. The Russian Federation and the United States have pledged to cut their nuclear arsenals. This coming May, at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we have an opportunity to push for real progress. Tomorrow's historic Security Council summit — chaired by the President of the United States, who is with us for the first time — offers a fresh start. With action now, we can get the ratifications to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. Together, let us make this the year we agreed to banish the bomb.

Thirdly, in our fight against world poverty, let this be the year we focus on those left behind. Some

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speak of green shoots of recovery, but we see red flags of warning. Our recent report, "Voices of the Vulnerable", highlights a new crisis. The near-poor are becoming the new poor.

An estimated 100 million people could fall below the poverty line this year. Markets may be bouncing back, but incomes and jobs are not. People are angry. They believe that the global economy is stacked against them. That is why we have put forward a Global Jobs Pact for balanced and sustainable growth. That is why we are creating a new Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System, giving us real-time data and analysis on the socio-economic picture around the world. We need to know who is being hurt, and where, so we can best respond.

That is also why, next year at this time, we will convene a special summit on the Millennium Development Goals. With only five years to go, we must mount a final push towards 2015. Rightly, we put women and children at the fore. UNICEF reports a 28 per cent decline in child mortality over the past two decades. We can hope for similar progress on maternal health and mortality.

The prevention of sexual violence against women must be a top priority. Let us agree: these acts are an abomination. Leaders of every nation are personally accountable when such crimes are committed within their borders. When women die in childbirth or when they are raped as a weapon of war and have nowhere to turn, we of the United Nations cannot look the other way. And that is why, just recently, Members agreed to create a single agency to address women's issues. We have never been more empowered to empower women.

(*spoke in French*)

The General Assembly has also reaffirmed the responsibility to protect. In our time, no country, small or large, can with full impunity violate the basic rights of its citizens. Where there is conflict, there must be justice and responsibility. That is why the work of the International Criminal Court is so important. We hope that the mandate of that body will be strengthened by the Review Conference to be held in May in Kampala.

Peace, security and justice are indispensable to the achievement of our noble goals. In Darfur, recent progress must be consolidated and we must fulfil our mandate. By the end of the year, our deployment will be at 90 per cent, but we still lack critical materiel, particularly vehicles such as helicopters. Moreover, we must continue to do our utmost to stabilize the Sudan and the region and to consolidate the Comprehensive Peace Agreement reached with Southern Sudan.

Somalia must not be forgotten. African peacekeepers and the Government must be supported, as must the international fight against piracy.

In Sri Lanka, we will continue to work to promote reintegration, reconciliation and respect for the principle of responsibility. We commend the Government's commitment to enabling displaced persons to return to their homes by late January, as it reaffirmed last week to my envoy.

We will do our utmost to promote liberty and democracy in Myanmar. The release of certain political prisoners last week is not enough. We call on Myanmar's friends and neighbours to do more, much more, in the interests of Myanmar and its people. In order to ensure that the elections to be held next year can be deemed credible and open to all, all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, must be freed.

(*spoke in English*)

We worked to stop the bloodshed in Gaza, yet people continue to suffer. Issues of justice and accountability need to be addressed. We must revive negotiations towards a two-State solution and a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. We support President Obama's efforts for a resumption of peace talks and will work within the Quartet to that end.

In Afghanistan, we face a difficult environment. The recent elections revealed serious defects, yet we should not forget the progress made — progress that we can build on. We are committed to seeing the Afghans through their long night. We will stay with them.

We pledge to stand as well with the people of Pakistan. We have made significant progress in Timor-Leste, Haiti, Sierra Leone and Nepal. We see quiet progress in Iraq and fresh opportunities in Cyprus. Now is the time to take stock and move forward.

Let me close by inviting representatives to look around. By the end of this session of the General Assembly, our Secretariat building will be empty. Our staff will have dispersed across the city. Our United Nations will be completely renovated. Our common

ambition is to make that outward renovation the symbol of our inward renewal.

That is why we have placed such emphasis on building a stronger United Nations for a better world. We have made progress in delivering as one United Nations. We have made strides in getting peacebuilding right so that societies emerging from war do not slide back into conflict. We have sharpened our tools of mediation and diplomacy so that we can stop crises from escalating into broader and more costly tragedies.

We created the Department of Field Support, and we are developing the New Horizons strategy to make peacekeeping more agile and effective. To that end, we need the strong support of Member States, just as we do to secure the safety of our brave staff serving in dangerous places, too many of whom have lost their lives in the causes that we all serve.

This year, I have travelled from the ice rim of the Arctic to the steppes of Mongolia. I have seen first hand the effects of climate change on our planet and its people. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I met an 18-year-old girl who had been raped by soldiers. Her hope for a new life is the United Nations.

At summits from Trinidad and Tobago and London to L'Aquila, I have spoken out on one point above all others. We of the United Nations are the voice of the voiceless and the defenders of the defenceless. If we are to offer genuine hope to the hopeless and to truly turn the corner to economic recovery, we must do so for all nations and all people.

So much is possible if we work together. Together, we are here to take risks, to assume the burden of responsibility, to rise to an exceptional moment and to make history. This year, of all years, requires no less because we are the United Nations. We are the best hope for humankind, and now is our time. I thank Members very much for their leadership and commitment.

Agenda item 8

General debate

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a great honour for me, my country, Libya, and its leadership to preside over the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. I am humbled by the trust and confidence that the Member States have bestowed upon me. I hope that I prove worthy of their confidence.

First, I would like to commend Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his tireless efforts. I would also like to thank and to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his support and cooperation. Together, we are resolved to work for a more effective and stronger Organization that is more responsive to the daunting challenges facing the world today.

The sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly is taking place at an important and critical juncture. The international community is faced with multiple crises and enormous challenges, including those of international peace and security, that continue to threaten peace in various parts of the world through protracted inter-State conflicts, civil wars, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and transnational organized crime.

The challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, extreme poverty and deadly infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, require innovative and concerted action and approaches. The setbacks to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the economic, financial, food and energy crises, and disarmament and non-proliferation issues are all challenges that form the backdrop to the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Let us be clear about one important issue. Those challenges can be addressed only through international cooperation among States and a fully functioning multilateral system. Multilateralism is the way forward to address common global problems and the only way to ensure collective action.

Yesterday, the Secretary-General convened a special meeting on the environment and climate change, for which I would like a tribute to pay to him. The meeting was successful and an example of our collective work that will help to ensure the success of the Copenhagen Conference and to lead us to a comprehensive agreement on the issue of climate change. Almost all States are committed to working towards the success of the Copenhagen Conference.

There shall also be a summit meeting of the Security Council, with the participation of non-members of the Council invited by its President, President Obama of the United States. We hope that this meeting shall also be crowned with success. This meeting is in our

view an example of the collective action that we can take in facing our challenges.

The international community has learned from experience that the transnational threats and multiple crises facing the world today can be addressed only through responsible international cooperation. We have also learned that unilateral action only exacerbates conflicts and delays our search for more sustainable solutions.

The United Nations is the embodiment of multilateralism and thus the most legitimate forum for ensuring concerted global action. The General Assembly is the chief deliberative policymaking organ of the United Nations, possessed of a global membership and universal legitimacy unmatched by any other organization.

I am very pleased to see consensus on the need to revitalize the United Nations in order to ensure its effective response to emerging transnational threats and crises. Political will and leadership are critical to achieving this objective. An effective and credible rules-based multilateral system requires an energized and reformed United Nations. It is in this context that I pledge to work with all Member States to facilitate consensus on a revitalized General Assembly, a more representative and reformed Security Council and other initiatives to improve the effectiveness and management of the Organization.

As President of the General Assembly, I am also committed to working with all Member States to ensure effective responses to global crises and to strengthen multilateralism and dialogue among civilizations for international peace, security and development.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing our planet. At this session, we must intensify our efforts to confront the negative man-made effects on the climate system. No Member State, regardless of its geography, development status or political ideology, can afford to ignore this issue, nor can any Member State solve it alone. The peoples of the world are looking to the General Assembly for leadership. We must respond in unity and with resolve. Thus, let us cast our differences aside as we work towards a global climate change agreement in Copenhagen in December. As President of the General Assembly, I am deeply committed to this cause and pledge my readiness to work with the Secretary-General and the membership to achieve that goal.

Despite international consensus and many initiatives, opinion differs on how best to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development, whether in Africa or in the world at large. The bulk of United Nations peacekeeping activities fully accomplish their mandates, but we need to focus more on conflict prevention and resolution and on strengthened partnerships with the African Union and subregional organizations. We need a more substantive, comprehensive and coherent approach to peace, security and development in Africa takes the situation on the ground into account. The General Assembly can play an important role in this regard. The general debate provides an ideal forum for an exchange of views on these important issues. I am very pleased that the General Assembly has decided to convene a high-level plenary meeting at the commencement of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 2010.

Supporting post-conflict peacebuilding will continue to be one of the most important issues of concern to Member States. The record of the international community in this area is mixed. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2005 was meant to fill a gap by giving the necessary attention to countries emerging from conflict. Resolution 60/180, establishing the Peacebuilding Commission, provided for a review after five years. I will therefore work with Member States to develop and facilitate a process for this review, and I hope that new ideas will emerge on how to make that United Nations body more effective and responsive.

In 2005, our heads of State and Government reaffirmed that the promotion and protection of human rights are among the three principal purposes of this Organization and declared that human rights stood alongside development and peace and security as a foundational pillar of the Organization. Let us therefore commit to ensuring that the third pillar is a pillar of stone, buttressed by the appropriate resources, respect and credibility, to the benefit of an institution that has dedicated itself to the cause of human dignity and justice.

I will work with Member States to reaffirm our collective commitment to universality, non-selectivity and the indivisible, interdependent and interrelated nature of all human rights — civil and political rights;

economic, social and cultural rights; and the right to development. Let us approach this pillar with humility and a sense of responsibility, mindful of the fact that all Member States have human rights challenges. Let us embrace it with purpose, knowing that those challenges must be met, both for the cause of human rights itself and for the benefit of peace and development.

At this session, we will be called upon to follow-up on the outcome of the Durban Review Conference at a moment when the scourge of racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance represents a challenge to societies across the globe. We will be required to support the further development of the Human Rights Council and to begin to prepare ourselves for its five-year review. If we do so with dedication to the cause and in a spirit of principled, constructive engagement, I am confident that we will leave the third pillar of human rights stronger than ever before.

The question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East have been on the agenda of the plenary of the General Assembly for many years. Despite many efforts, the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict remain unresolved and continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. There is universal recognition that, with the rapidly deteriorating conditions in the occupied territories, the situation has become intolerable. A comprehensive and just settlement that restores their legitimate rights to the rightful owners is urgently needed.

In the face of enormous challenges, we have not been able to achieve progress, although many efforts have been made to put an end to settlement activities and to work towards achieving peace. In this respect, the United Nations, with its mandates and international legitimacy, must play its part in contributing constructively to realizing the objective of just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Every year, countries large and small, be they the most powerful or the weakest, make frequent reference to the importance of the rule of law in their national affairs. Yet it is in striving for the rule of law within international affairs, the so-called rule of law at the international level, that this Organization has a unique responsibility.

Strengthening the rule of law at the international level requires a shared vision. For me, this vision consists of an international order in which the exercise of power, not only by States but by others, including the Organization itself, is subject to law. The Charter of the United Nations stipulates this, in particular regarding the use of force by Member States. Since its inception, the General Assembly has been the universal centre for international standard-setting in various fields of international law. Yet the rule of law means little in the absence of accountability under law.

In the face of violations of international law, there must be comprehensive and effective means of redress. Our international system will always be complex and multifaceted, as will, therefore, the means of ensuring the accountability of States, individuals and other actors. While the international community is constantly strengthening its accountability mechanisms, including those pertaining to conflict resolution, we have a long way to go to fulfil this essential part of the vision.

Accountability under law is not enough to attain an international rule of law that is in harmony with all of our shared fundamental values. The law itself, including at the international level, must reinforce our common belief in the fundamental dignity of all human beings. Our vision must involve an international system of States, this Organization and other actors subject to and effectively accountable under a law that resonates fully with the pursuits of justice and universal human rights.

Before giving the floor to the first speaker for this morning, I would like to remind Member States that the list of speakers for the general debate has been established on the agreed basis that statements should be no longer than 15 minutes so as to enable all speakers to be heard at a given meeting. Within this time frame, I should like to appeal to all the speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed so that proper interpretation in the six official United Nations languages can be provided.

I would also like to draw the General Assembly's attention to the decision made by the Assembly at previous sessions, namely, that the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is strongly discouraged. We hope that all will observe that decision. In this connection, after delivering their statements, speakers are kindly invited to exit the

General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to proceed in the same manner during the general debate of the sixth-fourth session?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Finally, I should like to draw the attention of members to the fact that during the general debate, official photographs of all speakers are taken by the Department of Public Information. Members interested in obtaining these photographs are kindly requested to contact the Photo Library of the United Nations.

Address by Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Da Silva (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): The General Assembly has been and must continue to be the great forum for general debate concerning humankind's major problems.

I wish to discuss three crucial issues which I believe to be interconnected. Three perils that haunt our planet are the ongoing economic crisis, the lack of stable, democratic world governance and the threat posed by climate change to all of our lives.

Exactly one year ago, at the outset of the economic crisis that overtook the world economy, I said from this rostrum that history would never forgive us for the serious blunder of dealing only with the impact of the crisis rather than its causes. More than a crisis of big banks, this is a crisis of big dogmas. An economic, political and social outlook held to be unquestionable has simply fallen apart. A senseless way of thinking and acting which dominated the world for decades has proven itself bankrupt.

I refer to the absurd doctrine that markets could regulate themselves with no need for so-called intrusive State intervention. And I refer to the thesis of absolute freedom for financial capital, with no rules or transparency, beyond the control of people and institutions. It was an iniquitous defence of a minimal, crippled, weakened state, unable to promote development or to fight poverty and inequities.

It included the demonization of social policies, an obsession with precarious labour relations and an irresponsible commoditization of public services. The real cause of the crises is that most of the sovereignty of peoples and nations and their democratic governments had been confiscated by autonomous networks of wealth and power.

I said then that the time had come for political decisions. I said that leaders, rather than arrogant technocrats must take responsibility for bringing worldwide disorder under control. Controlling the crisis and changing the course of the world's economy could not be left to the usual few.

Developed countries and the multilateral agencies that they run had been unable to foresee the approaching catastrophe, much less prevent it. The impact of the crisis spread around the world, striking, above all, countries that for years, and at great sacrifice, had been rebuilding their economies.

It is not fair that the price of runaway speculation be paid by those who had nothing to do with it, by workers and by poor or developing countries. Twelve months later, we can see some progress, but many doubts still persist. No one is yet clearly willing to confront serious distortions of the global economy in the multilateral arena.

The fact that we avoided a total collapse of the system has apparently given rise to an irresponsible acquiescence in certain sectors. Most of the underlying problems have been ignored. There is enormous resistance to the adoption of effective mechanisms to regulate financial markets.

Rich countries are putting off reform at multilateral agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. We simply cannot understand the paralysis of the Doha Round, whose conclusion will, above all, benefit the poorest

countries of our world. There are also worrisome signs of return to protectionist practices, while little has been done to fight tax havens.

Many countries, however, have not sat waiting. Brazil, fortunately one of the last countries to be hit by the crisis, is now one of the first to emerge from it. There is no magic in what we did. We simply kept our financial system from being contaminated by the virus of speculation. We had already cut back our external vulnerability as we turned from debtors into international creditors. Along with other countries, we decided to contribute resources for the IMF to lend money to the poorest countries, free of the unacceptable conditions imposed in the past.

Above all, however, both before and after the crisis broke out, we implemented countercyclical policies. We intensified our social programmes, particularly income-transfer programmes. We raised wages above inflation rates. We used fiscal measures to stimulate consumption and keep the economy moving.

We have now emerged from our brief recession. Our economy has regained its impetus and shows promise for 2010. Foreign trade is recovering vitality, the labour market is doing amazingly well and macroeconomic equilibrium has been preserved, at no cost to the victories of our people's movements. What Brazil and other countries have shown is that, at times of crisis, we must still carry out bold social and development programmes.

Yet I hold no illusions that we might solve our problems alone, within our own borders. Because the global economy is interdependent, we are all obliged to intervene across national borders and must therefore establish once again the world economic order.

At meetings of the Group of 20 and many other meetings I have held with world leaders, I have insisted on the need to irrigate the world economy with a significant volume of credit. I have defended the regulation of financial markets, the widespread adoption of countercyclical policies, the end of protectionism and the fight against tax havens.

With the same determination, my country has proposed a true reform of the multilateral financial institutions. Poor and developing countries must increase their share of control in the IMF and the World Bank. Otherwise, there can be no real change, and the peril of new and greater crises will be inevitable. Only more representative and democratic international agencies will be able to deal with complex problems such as reorganizing the international monetary system.

Sixty-five years on, the world can no longer be run by the same rules and values that prevailed at the Bretton Woods Conference. Likewise, the United Nations and its Security Council can no longer be run under the same structures imposed after the Second World War. We are in a period of transition in international relations. We are moving towards a multilateral world. However, it is also a multipolar world, based on experiences in regional integration such as South America's experience in creating the Union of South American Nations.

This multipolar world will not conflict with the United Nations. On the contrary, it could be an invigorating factor for the United Nations. It would create the platform for a United Nations with the political and moral authority to solve the conflicts in the Middle East, assuring the coexistence of a Palestinian State with the State of Israel; a United Nations that confronts terrorism without stigmatizing ethnic groups and religions, instead dealing with underlying causes and promoting dialogue among civilizations; a United Nations that can truly help countries such as Haiti that are trying to rebuild their economies and mend their social fabric after achieving political stability; a United Nations committed to the African renaissance that we are now seeing; a United Nations able to implement effective policies that preserve and expand human rights; a United Nations that can make real progress towards disarmament in true balance with non-proliferation; a United Nations that can truly lead in initiatives to protect the planet's environment; a United Nations that can use its Economic and Social Council to forge decisions on confronting the economic crisis; and a United Nations that is representative enough to address threats to world peace through a reformed Security Council that is renewed and open to new permanent members.

We are not wishful thinkers. Yet it takes political will to confront and overcome situations that conspire against peace, development and democracy. Unless political will is present, throwbacks such as the embargo against Cuba will persist.

Unless there is political will, we will see more coups such as the one that toppled the constitutional

President of Honduras, José Manuel Zelaya, who has been granted refuge in Brazil's embassy in Tegucigalpa since Monday. The international community demands that Mr. Zelaya immediately return to the presidency of his country, and it must be alert to ensure the inviolability of Brazil's diplomatic mission in the capital of Honduras.

Finally, unless political will prevails, threats to the world such as climate change will continue to grow. All countries must take action to turn back global warming. We are dismayed by the reluctance of developed countries to shoulder their share of the burden when it comes to fighting climate change. They cannot burden developing and poor countries with tasks that are theirs alone.

Brazil is doing its part. We will arrive in Copenhagen with precise alternatives and commitments. We have approved a national climate change plan that includes an 80 per cent cut in deforestation of the Amazon by 2020. We will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 4.8 billion tons — more than the sum total of all the commitments of developed countries. In 2009, we can already boast the lowest deforestation rate in 20 years.

Brazil's energy blend is in one of the cleanest in the world. Forty-five per cent of the energy that my country consumes is renewable. In the rest of the world, only 12 per cent is renewable, while no country in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has a rate higher than 5 per cent. Eighty per cent of our electric power also comes from renewable sources.

All the gasoline sold for our passenger cars has 25 per cent ethanol blended into it. More than 80 per cent of the cars produced in our country have flexible-fuel engines that enable them to use any blend of gasoline and/or alcohol. Brazil's ethanol and other biofuels are produced in ever-improving conditions under the ecological zoning plan that we have just sent to our National Congress. We have banned sugar cane plantations and alcohol plants in areas with native vegetation. That decision applies to the entire Amazon region as well as to other major biomes. Sugar cane production covers no more than 2 per cent of our tillable land. Unlike other biofuels, it does not affect food security, much less compromise the environment. Companies, farm workers and the Government have signed an important commitment to ensure decent working conditions on Brazil's sugar cane plantations.

All those concerns are part of the energy policies of a country that is self-sufficient in oil and has just found major reserves that will put us in the forefront of fossil fuel production. Even so, Brazil will not relinquish its environmental agenda and simply turn into an oil giant. We plan to consolidate our role as a world Power in green energy. Meanwhile, developed countries must set emission-reduction goals that go far beyond those tabled to date, which represent a mere fraction of the reductions recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. We are also deeply concerned that the funding announced to date for technological innovations needed to protect the environment in developing countries is totally insufficient.

The solutions to those and other impasses will arise only if the perils of climate change are confronted with the understanding that we share common but differentiated responsibilities.

The issues at the core of our concerns — the financial crisis, new global governance and climate change — have one strong common denominator: the need to build a new international order that is sustainable, multilateral and less asymmetric, free of hegemonies and ruled by democratic institutions. Such a new world is a political and moral imperative. We cannot just shovel away the rubble of failure; we must be midwives to the future. That is the only way to make amends for so much injustice and to prevent new collective tragedies.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Obama: It is my honour to address the Assembly for the first time as the forty-fourth President of the United States. I come before you humbled by the responsibility that the American people have placed upon me, mindful of the enormous challenges of our moment in history and determined to act boldly and collectively on behalf of justice and prosperity at home and abroad.

I have been in office for just nine months, though some days it seems a lot longer. I am well aware of the expectations that accompany my presidency around the world. Those expectations are not about me. Rather they are, I believe, rooted in a discontent with the status quo that has allowed us to be increasingly defined by our differences and outpaced by our problems. But they are also rooted in hope — the hope that real change is possible and the hope that America will be a leader in bringing about such change.

I took office at a time when many around the world had come to view America with scepticism and distrust. A part of that was due to misperceptions and misinformation about my country. Part was due to opposition to specific policies and a belief that on certain critical issues America had acted unilaterally, without regard for the interests of others. That has fed an almost reflexive anti-Americanism, which too often has served as an excuse for collective inaction.

Like all of you, my responsibility is to act in the interests of my nation and my people, and I will never apologize for defending those interests. But it is my deeply held belief that in the year 2009, more than at any point in human history, the interests of nations and peoples are shared. The religious convictions that we hold in our hearts can forge new bonds among people, or they can tear us apart. The technology we harness can light the path to peace, or forever darken it. The energy we use can sustain our planet, or destroy it. What happens to the hope of a single child, anywhere, can enrich our world, or impoverish it.

In this Hall, we come from many places, but we share a common future. No longer do we have the luxury of indulging our differences to the exclusion of the work that we must do together. I have carried this message from London to Ankara, from Port-of-Spain to Moscow, from Accra to Cairo, and it is what I will speak about today.

Because the time has come for the world to move in a new direction, we must embrace a new era of engagement based on mutual interests and mutual respect, and our work must begin now. We know the future will be forged by deeds, and not simply words. Speeches alone will not solve our problems. It will take persistent action.

So for those who question the character and cause of my nation, I ask you to look at the concrete actions we have taken in just nine months.

On my first day in office I prohibited, without exception or equivocation, the use of torture by the United States of America. I ordered the prison at Guantanamo Bay closed, and we are doing the hard work of forging a framework to combat extremism within the rule of law.

Every nation must know that America will live its values, and we will lead by example. We have set a clear and focused goal to work with all members of this body to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al-Qaida and its extremist allies — a network that has killed thousands of people of many faiths and nations and has plotted to blow up this very building. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, we and many nations here are helping those Governments to develop the capacity to take the lead in this effort, while working to advance opportunity and security for their people.

In Iraq we are responsibly ending a war. We have removed American combat brigades from Iraqi cities and set a deadline of next August to remove all our combat brigades from Iraqi territory. I have made clear that we will help Iraqis make the transition to full responsibility for their future and keep our commitment to remove all American troops by the end of 2011.

I have outlined a comprehensive agenda to seek the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. In Moscow, the United States and Russia announced that we would pursue substantial reductions in our strategic warheads and launchers. In the Conference on Disarmament we agreed on a workplan to negotiate an end to the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. And this week, my Secretary of State will become the first senior American representative to the

annual members' conference of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Upon taking office, I appointed a special envoy for Middle East peace, and America has worked steadily and aggressively to advance the cause of two States — Israel and Palestine — in which peace and security take root and the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians are respected.

To confront climate change we have invested $80 billion in clean energy. We have substantially increased our fuel efficiency standards. We have provided new incentives for conservation, launched an energy partnership across the Americas and moved from being a bystander to being a leader in international climate negotiations.

To overcome an economic crisis that touches every corner of the world, we worked with the Group of 20 nations to forge a coordinated international response of over $2 trillion in stimulus to bring the global economy back from the brink. We mobilized resources that help prevent the crisis from spreading further to developing countries, and we joined with others to launch a $20 billion global food security initiative that will lend a hand to those who need it most and help them build their own capacity.

We have also re-engaged the United Nations. We have paid our bills. We have joined the Human Rights Council. We have signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We have fully embraced the Millennium Development Goals, and we address our priorities here in this institution, for instance through the Security Council meeting on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that I will chair tomorrow and through the issues that I will discuss today.

That is what we have already done, but it is just a beginning. Some of our actions have yielded progress; some have laid the groundwork for progress in the future. But make no mistake: this cannot solely be America's endeavour. Those who used to chastise America for acting alone in the world cannot now stand by and wait for America to solve the world's problems alone. We have sought, in word and deed, a new era of engagement with the world, and now is the time for all of us to take our share of responsibility for a global response to global challenges.

If we are honest with ourselves, we need to admit that we are not living up to that responsibility. Consider the course that we are on if we fail to confront the status quo: extremists sowing terror in pockets of the world, protracted conflicts that grind on and on, genocide, mass atrocities, more nations with nuclear weapons, melting ice caps and ravaged populations, persistent poverty and pandemic disease.

I say this not to sow fear, but to state a fact. The magnitude of our challenges has yet to be met by the measure of our actions. This body was founded on the belief that the nations of the world could solve their problems together. Franklin Roosevelt, who died before he could see his vision for this institution become a reality, put it this way:

> "The structure of world peace cannot be the work of one man, or one party, or one nation. It cannot be a peace of large nations or of small nations. It must be a peace which rests on the cooperative effort of the whole world."

The cooperative effort of the whole world — those words ring even more true today when it is not simply peace, but our very health and prosperity that we hold in common. Yet, we also know that this body is made up of sovereign States and that, sadly but not surprisingly, this body has often become a forum for sowing discord instead of forging common ground, a venue for playing politics and exploiting grievances rather than solving problems. After all, it is easy to walk up to this podium and point fingers and stoke divisions. Nothing is easier than blaming others for our troubles and absolving ourselves of responsibility for our choices and our actions. Anybody can do that. Responsibility and leadership in the twenty-first century demand more.

In an era when our destiny is shared, power is no longer a zero-sum game. No one nation can or should try to dominate another nation. No world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will succeed. No balance of power among nations will hold. The traditional divisions between nations of the South and the North make no sense in an interconnected world, nor do alignments of nations rooted in the cleavages of a long-gone cold war.

The time has come to realize that the old habits and the old arguments are irrelevant to the challenges faced by our peoples. They leave nations to act in opposition to the very goals that they claim to pursue and to vote, often in this body, against the interests of their own people. They build up walls between us and

the future that our peoples seek, and the time has come for those walls to come down. Together we must build new coalitions that bridge old divides — coalitions of different faiths and creeds, of North and South, East, West, black, white and brown.

The choice is ours. We can be remembered as the generation that chose to drag the arguments of the twentieth century into the twenty-first, and that put off hard choices, refused to look ahead, and failed to keep pace because we defined ourselves by what we were against instead of what we were for; or we can be a generation that chooses to see the shoreline beyond the rough waters ahead, that comes together to serve the common interests of human beings, and finally gives meaning to the promise imbedded in the name given to this institution — the United Nations. That is the future America wants — a future of peace and prosperity that we can reach only if we recognize that all nations have rights. But all nations have responsibilities as well. That is the bargain that makes this work. That must be the guiding principle of international cooperation.

Today, let me put forward four pillars that I believe are fundamental to the future that we want for our children: non-proliferation and disarmament, the promotion of peace and security, the preservation of our planet, and a global economy that advances opportunity for all people.

First, we must stop the spread of nuclear weapons and seek the goal of a world without them. This institution was founded at the dawn of the atomic age in part because man's capacity to kill had to be contained. For decades, we averted disaster, even under the shadow of a super-Power stand-off. But today the threat of proliferation is growing in scope and complexity. If we fail to act, we will invite nuclear arms races in every region and the prospect of wars and acts of terror on a scale that we can hardly imagine.

A fragile consensus stands in the way of this frightening outcome, and that is the basic bargain that shapes the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It says that all nations have the right to peaceful nuclear energy, and that nations with nuclear weapons have a responsibility to move towards disarmament and those without them have the responsibility to forsake them. The next 12 months could be pivotal in determining whether this compact will be strengthened or will slowly dissolve.

America intends to keep our end of the bargain. We will pursue a new agreement with Russia to substantially reduce our strategic warheads and launches. We will move forward with ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and work with others to bring the Treaty into force, so that nuclear testing is permanently prohibited. We will complete a nuclear posture review that opens the door to deeper cuts and reduces the role of nuclear weapons, and we will call upon countries to begin negotiations in January on a treaty to end the production of fissile material for weapons.

I will also host a summit next April that reaffirms each nation's responsibility to secure nuclear material on its territory and to help those who cannot, because we must never allow a single nuclear device to fall into the hands of a violent extremist. And we will work to strengthen the institutions and initiatives that combat nuclear smuggling and theft.

All of this must support efforts to strengthen the NPT. Those nations that refuse to live up to their obligations must face consequences. Let me be clear: This is not about singling out individual nations. It is about standing up for the rights of all nations that do live up to their responsibilities, because a world in which International Atomic Energy Agency inspections are avoided and the United Nations demands are ignored will leave all people less safe and all nations less secure.

In their actions to date, the Governments of North Korea and Iran threaten to take us down this dangerous slope. We respect their rights as members of the community of nations. I have said before and I will repeat: I am committed to diplomacy that opens a path to greater prosperity and more secure peace for both nations if they live up to their obligations. But if the Governments of Iran and North Korea choose to ignore international standards; if they put the pursuit of nuclear weapons ahead of regional stability and the security and opportunity of their own people; if they are oblivious to the dangers of escalating nuclear arms races in both East Asia and the Middle East, then they must be held accountable. The world must stand together to demonstrate that international law is not an empty promise and that treaties will be enforced. We must insist that the future does not belong to fear.

That brings me to the second pillar for our future: the pursuit of peace. The United Nations was born of

the belief that the people of the world can live their lives, raise their families and resolve their differences peacefully. Yet we know that in too many parts of the world this ideal remains an abstraction — a distant dream. We can either accept that outcome as inevitable and tolerate constant and crippling conflict, or we can recognize that the yearning for peace is universal and reassert our resolve to end conflicts around the world. That effort must begin with an unshakeable determination that the murder of innocent men, women and children will never be tolerated. On this, there can be no dispute.

The violent extremists who promote conflict by distorting faith have discredited and isolated themselves. They offer nothing but hatred and destruction. In confronting them, America will forge lasting partnerships to target terrorists, share intelligence, coordinate law enforcement and protect our people. We will permit no safe haven for Al-Qaida to launch attacks from Afghanistan or any other nation. We will stand by our friends on the front lines, as we and many nations will do in pledging support for the Pakistani people tomorrow. And we will pursue positive engagement that builds bridges among faiths and new partnerships for opportunity.

Our efforts to promote peace, however, cannot be limited to defeating violent extremists, for the most powerful weapon in our arsenal is the hope of human beings — the belief that the future belongs to those who would build and not destroy; the confidence that conflicts can end and a new day can begin. And that is why we will strengthen our support for effective peacekeeping, while energizing our efforts to prevent conflicts before they take hold.

We will pursue a lasting peace in Sudan, through support for the people of Darfur and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, so that we secure the peace that the Sudanese people deserve.

And in countries ravaged by violence, from Haiti to Congo to East Timor, we will work with the United Nations and other partners to support an enduring peace.

I will also continue to seek a just and lasting peace between Israel, Palestine and the Arab world. We will continue to work on that issue. Yesterday I had a constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas. We have made some progress. Palestinians have strengthened their efforts on security. Israelis have facilitated greater freedom of movement for the Palestinians. As a result of these efforts on both sides, the economy in the West Bank has begun to grow.

But more progress is needed. We continue to call on Palestinians to end incitement against Israel. And we continue to emphasize that America does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements.

The time has come to re-launch negotiations — without preconditions — that address the permanent-status issues: security for Israelis and Palestinians, borders, refugees and Jerusalem. The goal is clear: two States living side by side in peace and security: a Jewish State of Israel, with true security for all Israelis, and a viable, independent Palestinian State with contiguous territory that ends the occupation that began in 1967 and realizes the potential of the Palestinian people. As we pursue this goal, we will also pursue peace between Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Syria, and a broader peace between Israel and its many neighbours. In pursuit of that goal, we will develop regional initiatives with multilateral participation, alongside bilateral negotiations.

Now, I am not naive. I know this will be difficult. But all of us — not just the Israelis and the Palestinians, but all of us — must decide whether we are serious about peace, or whether we will only lend it lip-service. To break the old patterns — to break the cycle of insecurity and despair — all of us must say publicly what we would acknowledge in private. The United States does Israel no favours when we fail to couple an unwavering commitment to its security with an insistence that Israel respect the legitimate claims and rights of the Palestinians. And nations within this body do the Palestinians no favours when they choose vitriolic attacks against Israel over a constructive willingness to recognize Israel's legitimacy and its right to exist in peace and security.

We must remember that the greatest price of this conflict is not paid by us. It is not paid by politicians. It is paid by the Israeli girl in Sderot who closes her eyes in fear that a rocket will take her life in the middle of the night. It is paid by the Palestinian boy in Gaza who has no clean water and no country to call his own. These are all God's children. And after all the politics and all the posturing, this is about the right of every human being to live with dignity and security. That is a lesson embedded in the three great faiths that call one small slice of Earth the Holy Land. And that is why —

even though there will be setbacks, and false starts, and tough days — I will not waiver in my pursuit of peace.

Thirdly, we must recognize that in the twenty-first century there will be no peace unless we take responsibility for the preservation of our planet. And I thank the Secretary-General for hosting the summit on climate change yesterday.

The danger posed by climate change cannot be denied. Our responsibility to meet it must not be deferred. If we continue down our current course, every member of this Assembly will see irreversible changes within its borders. Our efforts to end conflicts will be eclipsed by wars over refugees and resources. Development will be devastated by drought and famine. Land that human beings have lived on for millennia will disappear. Future generations will look back and wonder why we refused to act — why we failed to pass on an environment that was worthy of our inheritance.

And that is why the days when America dragged its feet on this issue are over. We will move forward with investments to transform our energy economy, while providing incentives to make clean energy the profitable kind of energy. We will press ahead with deep cuts in emissions to reach the goals that we set for 2020, and eventually 2050. We will continue to promote renewable energy and efficiency — and share new technologies — with countries around the world. And we will seize every opportunity for progress to address this threat in a cooperative effort with the entire world.

Those wealthy nations that did so much damage to the environment in the twentieth century must accept our obligation to lead. But responsibility does not end there. While we must acknowledge the need for differentiated responses, any effort to curb carbon emissions must include the fast-growing carbon emitters who can do more to reduce their air pollution without inhibiting growth. And any effort that fails both to help the poorest nations to adapt to the problems that climate change has already wrought and to help them travel a path of clean development simply will not work.

It is hard to change something as fundamental as how we use energy. I know that. It is even harder to do so in the midst of a global recession. Certainly, it will be tempting to sit back and wait for others to move first. But we cannot make this journey unless we all move forward together. As we head into Copenhagen, let us resolve to focus on what each of us can do for the sake of our common future.

This leads me to the final pillar that must fortify our future: a global economy that advances opportunity for all people.

The world is still recovering from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. In America, we see the engine of growth beginning to churn, and yet many still struggle to find a job or pay their bills. Across the globe, we find promising signs, but little certainty about what lies ahead. And far too many people in far too many places live through the daily crises that challenge our humanity: the despair of an empty stomach; the thirst brought on by dwindling water supplies; the injustice of a child dying from a treatable disease or a mother losing her life as she gives birth.

In Pittsburgh, we will work with the world's largest economies to chart a course for growth that is balanced and sustained. That means vigilance to ensure that we do not let up until our people are back to work. That means taking steps to rekindle demand, so that global recovery can be sustained. And that means setting new rules of the road and strengthening regulation for all financial centres, so that we put an end to the greed and the excess and the abuse that led us into this disaster, and prevent a crisis like this from ever happening again.

At a time of such interdependence, we have a moral and pragmatic interest, however, in broader questions of development: the questions of development that existed even before this crisis happened. And so America will continue our historic effort to help people feed themselves. We have set aside $63 billion to carry forward the fight against HIV/AIDS, to end deaths from tuberculosis and malaria, to eradicate polio and to strengthen public health systems. We are joining with other countries to contribute H1N1 vaccines to the World Health Organization. We will integrate more economies into a system of global trade. We will support the Millennium Development Goals and approach next year's summit with a global plan to make them a reality. And we will set our sights on the eradication of extreme poverty in our time.

Now is the time for all of us to do our part. Growth will not be sustained or shared unless all nations embrace their responsibilities. That means that

wealthy nations must open their markets to more goods and extend a hand to those with less, while reforming international institutions to give more nations a greater voice. And developing nations must root out the corruption that is an obstacle to progress, for opportunity cannot thrive where individuals are oppressed and businesses have to pay bribes. That is why we will support honest police and independent judges, civil society and a vibrant private sector. Our goal is simple: a global economy in which growth is sustained and opportunity is available to all.

Now, the changes that I have spoken about today will not be easy to make, and they will not be realized simply by leaders like us coming together in forums like this, as useful as that may be. For, as in any assembly of members, real change can only come through the people we represent. That is why we must do the hard work to lay the groundwork for progress in our own capitals. That is where we will build the consensus to end conflicts and to harness technology for peaceful purposes, to change the way we use energy and to promote growth that can be sustained and shared.

I believe that the people of the world want this future for their children. And that is why we must champion those principles that ensure that Governments reflect the will of the people. These principles cannot be afterthoughts. Democracy and human rights are essential to achieving each of the goals that I have discussed today, because Governments of the people and by the people are more likely to act in the broader interests of their own people, rather than the narrow interest of those in power.

The test of our leadership will not be the degree to which we feed the fears and old hatreds of our people. True leadership will not be measured by the ability to muzzle dissent or to intimidate and harass political opponents at home. The people of the world want change. They will not long tolerate those who are on the wrong side of history.

This Organization's Charter commits each of us "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women".

Among those rights is the freedom to speak your mind and worship as you please, the promise of equality of the races and the opportunity for women and girls to pursue their own potential, and the ability of citizens to have a say in how you are governed and to have confidence in the administration of justice. For, just as no nation should be forced to accept the tyranny of another nation, no individual should be forced to accept the tyranny of their own people.

As an African-American, I will never forget that I would not be here today without the steady pursuit of a more perfect union in my country. That guides my belief that no matter how dark the day may seem, transformative change can be forged by those who choose to side with justice. And I pledge that America will always stand with those who stand up for their dignity and their rights — for the student who seeks to learn, the voter who demands to be heard, the innocent who longs to be free and the oppressed who yearns to be equal.

Democracy cannot be imposed on any nation from the outside. Each society must search for its own path, and no path is perfect. Each country will pursue a path rooted in the culture of its people and in its past traditions. And I admit that America has too often been selective in its promotion of democracy. But that does not weaken our commitment; it only reinforces it. There are basic principles that are universal. There are certain truths that are self-evident, and the United States of America will never waiver in our efforts to stand up for the right of people everywhere to determine their own destiny.

Sixty-five years ago, a weary Franklin Roosevelt spoke to the American people in his fourth, and final, inaugural address. After years of war, he sought to sum up the lessons that could be drawn from the terrible suffering and enormous sacrifice that had taken place. We have learned, he said, to be citizens of the world, members of the human community. The United Nations was built by men and women like Roosevelt from every corner of the world — from Africa and Asia, from Europe to the Americas. These architects of international cooperation had an idealism that was anything but naive. It was rooted in the hard-earned lessons of war, rooted in the wisdom that nations could advance their interests by acting together instead of splitting apart.

Now it falls to us, for this institution will be what we make of it. The United Nations does extraordinary good around the world, in feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and mending places that have been broken.

But it also struggles to enforce its will and to live up to the ideals of its founding. I believe that those imperfections are not a reason to walk away from this institution; they are a calling to redouble our efforts. The United Nations can be a place where we either bicker about outdated grievances or forge common ground; a place where we focus on what drives us apart or what brings us together; a place where we indulge tyranny or a source of moral authority. In short, the United Nations can be an institution that is disconnected from what matters in the lives of our citizens or it can be an indispensable factor in advancing the interests of the people we serve.

We have reached a pivotal moment. The United States stands ready to begin a new chapter of international cooperation, one that recognizes the rights and responsibilities of all nations. And so, with confidence in our cause and with a commitment to our values, we call on all nations to join us in building the future that our people so richly deserve.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank the President of the United States of America for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi, Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi, Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi, Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, President of the African Union and King of African Kings, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Colonel Al-Qadhafi (*spoke in Arabic*): In the name of the African Union, I would like to greet the members of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and I hope that this meeting will be among the most historic in the history of the world.

In the name of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, presided over by Libya, of the African Union, of one thousand traditional African kingdoms and in my own name, I would like to take this opportunity, as President of the African Union, to congratulate our son Obama because he is attending the General Assembly, and we welcome him as his country is hosting this meeting.

This session is taking place in the midst of so many challenges facing us, and the whole world should come together and unite its efforts to defeat the challenges that are our principal common enemy — those of climate change and international crises such as the capitalist economic decline, the food and water crises, desertification, terrorism, immigration, piracy, man-made and natural epidemics and nuclear proliferation. Perhaps influenza H1N1 was a virus created in a laboratory that got out of control, originally being meant as a military weapon. Such challenges also include hypocrisy, poverty, fear, materialism and immorality.

As is known, the United Nations was founded by three or four countries against Germany at the time. The United Nations was formed by the nations that joined together against Germany in the Second World War. Those countries formed a body called the Security Council, made its own countries permanent members and granted them the power of veto. We were not present at that time. The United Nations was shaped in line with those three countries and wanted us to step into shoes originally designed against Germany. That is the real substance of the United Nations when it was founded over 60 years ago.

That happened in the absence of some 165 countries, at a ratio of one to eight; that is, one was present and eight were absent. They created the Charter, of which I have a copy. If one reads the Charter of the United Nations, one finds that the Preamble of the Charter differs from its Articles. How did it come into existence? All those who attended the San Francisco Conference in 1945 participated in creating the Preamble, but they left the Articles and internal rules of procedures of the so-called Security

Council to experts, specialists and interested countries, which were those countries that had established the Security Council and had united against Germany.

The Preamble is very appealing, and no one objects to it, but all the provisions that follow it completely contradict the Preamble. We reject such provisions, and we will never uphold them; they ended with the Second World War. The Preamble says that all nations, small or large, are equal. Are we equal when it comes to the permanent seats? No, we are not equal. The Preamble states in writing that all nations are equal whether they are small or large. Do we have the right of veto? Are we equal? The Preamble says that we have equal rights, whether we are large or small. That is what is stated and what we agreed in the Preamble. So the veto contradicts the Charter. The permanent seats contradict the Charter. We neither accept nor recognize the veto.

The Preamble of the Charter states that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest. That is the Preamble that we agreed to and signed, and we joined the United Nations because we wanted the Charter to reflect that. It says that armed force shall only be used in the common interest of all nations, but what has happened since then? Sixty-five wars have broken out since the establishment of the United Nations and the Security Council — 65 since their creation, with millions more victims than in the Second World War. Are those wars, and the aggression and force that were used in those 65 wars, in the common interest of us all? No, they were in the interest of one or three or four countries, but not of all nations.

We will talk about whether those wars were in the interest of one country or of all nations. That flagrantly contradicts the Charter of the United Nations that we signed, and unless we act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to which we agreed, we will reject it and not be afraid not to speak diplomatically to anyone. Now we are talking about the future of the United Nations. There should be no hypocrisy or diplomacy because it concerns the important and vital issue of the future of the world. It was hypocrisy that brought about the 65 wars since the establishment of the United Nations.

The Preamble also states that if armed force is used, it must be a United Nations force — thus, military intervention by the United Nations, with the joint agreement of the United Nations, not one or two or three countries using armed force. The entire United Nations will decide to go to war to maintain international peace and security. Since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, if there is an act of aggression by one country against another, the entire United Nations should deter and stop that act.

If a country, Libya for instance, were to exhibit aggression against France, then the entire Organization would respond because France is a sovereign State Member of the United Nations and we all share the collective responsibility to protect the sovereignty of all nations. However, 65 aggressive wars have taken place without any United Nations action to prevent them. Eight other massive, fierce wars, whose victims number some 2 million, have been waged by Member States that enjoy veto powers. Those countries that would have us believe they seek to maintain the sovereignty and independence of peoples actually use aggressive force against peoples. While we would like to believe that these countries want to work for peace and security in the world and protect peoples, they have instead resorted to aggressive wars and hostile behaviour. Enjoying the veto they granted themselves as permanent members of the Security Council, they have initiated wars that have claimed millions of victims.

The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. No country, therefore, has the right to interfere in the affairs of any Government, be it democratic or dictatorial, socialist or capitalist, reactionary or progressive. This is the responsibility of each society; it is an internal matter for the people of the country concerned. The senators of Rome once appointed their leader, Julius Caesar, as dictator because it was good for Rome at that time. No one can say of Rome at that time that it gave Caesar the veto. The veto is not mentioned in the Charter.

We joined the United Nations because we thought we were equals, only to find that one country can object to all the decisions we make. Who gave the permanent members their status in the Security Council? Four of them granted this status to themselves. The only country that we in this Assembly elected to permanent member status in the Security Council is China. This was done democratically, but the other seats were imposed upon us undemocratically through a dictatorial procedure carried out against our will, and we should not accept it.

The Security Council reform we need is not an increase in the number of members, which would only make things worse. To use a common expression, if you add more water, you get more mud. It would add insult to injury. It would make things worse simply by adding more large countries to those that already enjoy membership of the Council. It would merely perpetuate the proliferation of super-Powers. We therefore reject the addition of any more permanent seats. The solution is not to have more permanent seats, which would be very dangerous. Adding more super-Powers would crush the peoples of small, vulnerable and third world countries, which are coming together in what has been called the Group of 100 — 100 small countries banding together in a forum that one member has called the Forum of Small States.

These countries would be crushed by super-Powers were additional large countries to be granted membership in the Security Council. This door must be closed; we reject it strongly and categorically. Adding more seats to the Security Council would increase poverty, injustice and tension at the world level, as well as great competition between certain countries such as Italy, Germany, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Japan, Brazil, Nigeria, Argentina, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Tanzania, Turkey, Iran, Greece and Ukraine. All these countries would seek a seat on the Security Council, making its membership almost as large as that of the General Assembly and resulting in an impractical competition.

What solution can there be? The solution is for the General Assembly to adopt a binding resolution under the leadership of Mr. Treki based on the majority will of Assembly members and taking into account the considerations of no other body. The solution is to close Security Council membership to the admission of further States. This item is on the agenda of the General Assembly during the present session presided over by Mr. Treki. Membership through unions and the transference of mandates should supersede other proposals.

We should focus on the achievement of democracy based on the equality of Member States. There should be equality among Member States and the powers and mandates of the Security Council should be transferred to the General Assembly. Membership should be for unions, not for States. Increasing the number of States Members would give the right to all countries to a seat, in accordance with the spirit of the Preamble of the Charter.

No country could deny a seat in the Council to Italy, for instance, if a seat were given to Germany. For the sake of argument, Italy might say that Germany was an aggressive country and was defeated in the Second World War. If we gave India a seat, Pakistan would say that it, too, is a nuclear country and deserves a seat, and those two countries are at war. This would be a dangerous situation. If we gave a seat to Japan, then we should have to give one to Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world. Then Turkey, Iran and Ukraine would make the same claim. What could we say to Argentina or Brazil? Libya deserves a seat for its efforts in the service of world security by discarding its weapons of mass destruction programme. Then South Africa, Tanzania and Ukraine would demand the same. All of these countries are important. The door to Security Council membership should be closed.

This approach is a falsehood, a trick that has been exposed. If we want to reform the United Nations, bringing in more super-Powers is not the way. The solution is to foster democracy at the level of the general congress of the world, the General Assembly, to which the powers of the Security Council should be transferred. The Security Council would become merely an instrument for implementing the decisions taken by the General Assembly, which would be the parliament, the legislative assembly, of the world.

This Assembly is our democratic forum and the Security Council should be responsible before it; we should not accept the current situation. These are the legislators of the Members of the United Nations, and their resolutions should be binding. It is said that the General Assembly should do whatever the Security Council recommends. On the contrary, the Security Council should do whatever the General Assembly decides. This is the United Nations, the Assembly that includes 192 countries. It is not the Security Council, which includes only 15 of the Member States.

How can we be happy about global peace and security if the whole world is controlled by only five countries? We are 192 nations and countries, and we are like Speakers' Corner in London's Hyde Park. We just speak and nobody implements our decisions. We are mere decoration, without any real substance. We are Speakers' Corner, no more, no less. We just make

speeches and then disappear. This is who you are right now.

Once the Security Council becomes only an executive body for resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, there will be no competition for membership of the Council. Once the Security Council becomes a tool to implement General Assembly resolutions, there will be no need for any competition. The Security Council should, quite simply, represent all nations. In accordance with the proposal submitted to the General Assembly, there would be permanent seats on the Security Council for all unions and groups of countries.

The 27 countries of the European Union should have a permanent seat on the Security Council. The countries of the African Union should have a permanent seat on the Security Council. The Latin American and ASEAN countries should have permanent seats. The Russian Federation and the United States of America are already permanent members of the Security Council. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), once it is fully established, should have a permanent seat. The 22 countries of the Arab League should have a permanent seat. The 57 countries of the Islamic Conference should have a permanent seat. The 118 countries of the Non-Aligned Movement should have a permanent seat.

Then there is the G-100; perhaps the small countries should also have a permanent seat. Countries not included in the unions that I have mentioned could perhaps be assigned a permanent seat, to be occupied by them in rotation every six or twelve months. I am thinking of countries like Japan and Australia that are outside such organizations as ASEAN or like the Russian Federation that is not a member of the European or Latin American or African unions. This would be a solution for them if the General Assembly votes in favour of it.

The issue is a vitally important one. As has already been mentioned, the General Assembly is the Congress and Parliament of the world, the leader of the world. We are the nations, and anyone outside this General Assembly will not be recognized. The President of the Assembly, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will produce the legal draft and set up the necessary committees to submit this proposal to a vote: that from now on, the Security Council will be made up of unions of nations. In this way, we will have justice and democracy, and we will no longer have a Security Council consisting of countries which have been chosen because they have nuclear weapons, large economies or advanced technology. That is terrorism. We cannot allow the Security Council to be run by super-Powers; that is terrorism in and of itself.

If we want a world that is united, safe and peaceful, this is what we should do. If we want to remain in a world at war, that is up to you. We will continue to have conflict and to fight until doomsday or the end of the world. All Security Council members should have the right to exercise the veto, or else we should eliminate the whole concept of the veto with this new formation of the Council. This would be a real Security Council. According to the new proposals submitted to the General Assembly, it will be an executive council under the control of the General Assembly, which will have the real power and make all the rules.

In this way, all countries will be on an equal footing in the Security Council just as they are in the General Assembly. In the General Assembly we are all treated equally when it comes to membership and voting. It should be the same in the Security Council. Currently, one country has a veto; another country does not have a veto; one country has a permanent seat; another country does not have a permanent seat. We should not accept this, nor should we accept any resolution adopted by the Security Council in its current composition. We were under trusteeship; we were colonized; and now we are independent. We are here today to decide the future of the world in a democratic way that will maintain the peace and security of all nations, large and small, as equals. Otherwise, it is terrorism, for terrorism is not just Al-Qaida but can also take other forms.

We should be guided by the majority of the votes in the General Assembly alone. If the General Assembly takes a decision by voting, then its wishes should be obeyed and its decision should be enforced. No one is above the General Assembly; anyone who says he is above the Assembly should leave the United Nations and be on his own. Democracy is not for the rich or the most powerful or for those who practise terrorism. All nations should be and should be seen to be on an equal footing.

At present, the Security Council is security feudalism, political feudalism for those with permanent seats, protected by them and used against us. It should be called, not the Security Council, but the Terror Council. In our political life, if they need to use the Security Council against us, they turn to the Security Council. If they have no need to use it against us, they ignore the Security Council. If they have an interest to promote, an axe to grind, they respect and glorify the Charter of the United Nations; they turn to Chapter VII of the Charter and use it against poor nations. If, however, they wished to violate the Charter, they would ignore it as if it did not exist at all.

If the veto of the permanent members of the Security Council is given to those who have the power, this is injustice and terrorism and should not be toloerated by us. We should not live in the shadow of this injustice and terror.

Super-Powers have complicated global interests, and they use the veto to protect those interests. For example, in the Security Council, they use the power of the United Nations to protect their interests and to terrorize and intimidate the Third World, causing it to live under the shadow of terror.

From the beginning, since it was established in 1945, the Security Council has failed to provide security. On the contrary, it has provided terror and sanctions. It is only used against us. For this reason, we will no longer be committed to implementing Security Council resolutions after this speech, which marks the 40th anniversary.

Sixty-five wars have broken out: either fighting among small countries or wars of aggression waged against us by super-Powers. The Security Council, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, failed to take action to stop these wars or acts of aggressions against small nations and peoples.

The General Assembly will vote on a number of historic proposals. Either we act as one or we will fragment. If each nation were to have its own version of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the various instruments and each were to have an equal footing, the Powers that currently fill the permanent seats would be confinded to use of their own soverign bodies, whether there be three or four of them, and would have to exercise their rights against themselves. This is of no concern to us.

If they want to keep their permanent seats, that is fine; permanent seats will be of no concern to us. We shall never submit to their control or to their exercise of the veto that was given to them. We are not so foolish as to give the right of veto to the super-Powers to use so they can treat us as second-class citizens and as outcast nations. It is not we who decided that those countries are the super-Powers and respected nations with the power to act on behalf of 192 countries.

You should be fully aware that we are ignoring the Security Council resolutions because those resolutions are used solely against us and not against the super-Powers which have the permanent seats and the right of veto. Those Powers never use any resolutions against themselves.

They are, however, used against us. Such use has turned the United Nations into a travesty of itself and has generated wars and violations of the sovereignty of independent States. It has led to war crimes and genocides. All of this is in violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Since no one pays attention to the Security Council of the United Nations, each country and community has established its own security council, and the Security Council here has become isolated.

The African Union has already established its own Peace and Security Council, the European Union has already established a security council, and Asian countries have already established their own security council. Soon, Latin America will have its own Security Council as will the 120 non-aligned nations.

This means that we have already lost confidence in the United Nations Security Council, which has not provided us with security, and that is why we now are creating new regional security councils.

We are not committed to obeying the rules or the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council in its present form because it is undemocratic, dictatorial and unjust. No one can force us to join the Security Council or to obey or comply with resolutions or orders given by the Security Council in its present composition.

Furthermore, there is no respect for the United Nations and no regard for the General Assembly, which is actually the true United Nations, but whose resolutions are non-binding. The decisions of the International Court of Justice, the international judicial

body, take aim only at small countries and Third World nations. Powerful countries escape the notice of the Court. Or, if judicial decisions are taken against these powerful countries, they are not enforced.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an important agency within the United Nations. Powerful countries, however, are not accountable to it or under its jurisdiction. We have discovered that the IAEA is used only against us. We are told that it is an international organization, but, if that is the case, then all the countries of the world should be under its jurisdiction. If it is not truly international, then right after this speech we should no longer accept it and should close it down.

Mr. Treki, in his capacity as President of the General Assembly, should talk to the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. ElBaradei, and should ask him if he is prepared to verify nuclear energy storage in all countries and inspect all suspected increases. If he says yes, then we accept the Agency's jurisdiction. But if he says that he cannot go into certain countries that have nuclear power and that he does not have any jurisdiction over them, then we should close the Agency down and not submit to its jurisdiction.

For your information, I called Mr. ElBaradei when we had the problem of the Libyan nuclear bomb. I called Mr. ElBaradei and asked him if the agreements by the super-Powers to reduce nuclear supplies were subject to Agency control and under inspection, and whether he was aware of any increases in their activity. He told me that he was not in a position to ask the super-Powers to be inspected.

So, is the Agency only inspecting us? If so, it does not qualify as an international organization since it is selective, just like the Security Council and the International Court of Justice. This is not equitable nor is it the United Nations. We totally reject this situation.

Regarding Africa, Mr. President, whether the United Nations is reformed or not, and even before a vote is taken on any proposals of a historic nature, Africa should be given a permanent seat on the Security Council now, having already waited too long.

Leaving aside United Nations reform, we can certainly say that Africa was colonized, isolated and persecuted and its rights usurped. Its people were enslaved and treated like animals, and its territory was colonized and placed under trusteeship. The countries of the African Union deserve a permanent seat. This is a debt from the past that has to be paid and has nothing to do with United Nations reform. It is a priority matter and is high on the agenda of the General Assembly. No one can say that the African Union does not deserve a permanent seat.

Who can argue with this proposal? I challenge anyone to make a case against it. Where is the proof that the African Union or the African continent does not deserve a permanent seat? No one can possibly deny this.

Another matter that should be voted on in the General Assembly is that of compensation for countries that were colonized, so as to prevent the colonization of a continent, the usurpation of its rights and the pillaging of its wealth from happening again.

Why are Africans going to Europe? Why are Asians going to Europe? Why are Latin Americans going to Europe? It is because Europe colonized those peoples and stole the material and human resources of Africa, Asia and Latin America — the oil, minerals, uranium, gold and diamonds, the fruit, vegetables and livestock and the people — and used them. Now, new generations of Asians, Latin Americans and Africans are seeking to reclaim that stolen wealth, as they have the right to do.

At the Libyan border, I recently stopped 1,000 African migrants headed for Europe. I asked them why they were going there. They told me it was to take back their stolen wealth — that they would not be leaving otherwise. Who can restore the wealth that was taken from us? If you decide to restore all of this wealth, there will be no more immigration from the Philippines, Latin America, Mauritius and India. Let us have the wealth that was stolen from us. Africa deserves $777 trillion in compensation from the countries that colonized it. Africans will demand that amount, and if you do not give it to them, they will go to where you have taken those trillions of dollars. They have the right to do so. They have to follow that money and to bring it back.

Why is there no Libyan immigration to Italy, even though Libya is so close by? Italy owed compensation to the Libyan people. It accepted that fact and signed an agreement with Libya, which was adopted by both the Italian and Libyan Parliaments. Italy admitted that its colonization of Libya was wrong and should never be repeated, and it promised not to

attack the Libyan people by land, air or sea. Italy also agreed to provide Libya with $250 million a year in compensation over the next 20 years and to build a hospital for Libyans maimed as a result of the mines planted in Libyan territory during the Second World War. Italy apologized and promised that it would never again occupy the territory of another country. Italy, which was a kingdom during the Fascist regime and has made rich contributions to civilization, should be commended for this achievement, together with Prime Minister Berlusconi and his predecessor, who made their own contributions in that regard.

Why is the Third World demanding compensation? So that there will be no more colonization — so that large and powerful countries will not colonize, knowing that they will have to pay compensation. Colonization should be punished. The countries that harmed other peoples during the colonial era should pay compensation for the damage and suffering inflicted under their colonial rule.

There is another point that I would like to make. However, before doing so — and addressing a somewhat sensitive issue — I should like to make an aside. We Africans are happy and proud indeed that a son of Africa is now President of the United States of America. That is a historic event. Now, in a country where blacks once could not mingle with whites, in cafés or restaurants, or sit next to them on a bus, the American people have elected as their President a young black man, Mr. Obama, of Kenyan heritage. That is a wonderful thing, and we are proud. It marks the beginning of a change. However, as far as I am concerned, Obama is a temporary relief for the next four or eight years. I am afraid that we may then go back to square one. No one can guarantee how America will be governed after Obama.

We would be content if Obama could remain President of the United States of America for ever. The statement that he just made shows that he is completely different from any American President that we have seen. American Presidents used to threaten us with all manner of weapons, saying that they would send us Desert Storm, Grapes of Wrath, Rolling Thunder and poisonous roses for Libyan children. That was their approach. American Presidents used to threaten us with operations such as Rolling Thunder, sent to Viet Nam; Desert Storm, sent to Iraq; Musketeer, sent to Egypt in 1956, even though America opposed it; and the poisonous roses visited upon Libyan children by Reagan. Can you imagine? One would have thought that Presidents of a large country with a permanent seat on the Security Council and the right of veto would have protected us and sent us peace. And what did we get instead? Laser-guided bombs carried to us on F-111 aircraft. This was their approach: we will lead the world, whether you like it or not, and will punish anyone who opposes us.

What our son Obama said today is completely different. He made a serious appeal for nuclear disarmament, which we applaud. He also said that America alone could not solve the problems facing us and that the entire world should come together to do so. He said that we must do more than we are doing now, which is making speeches. We agree with that and applaud it. He said that we had come to the United Nations to talk against one another. It is true that when we come here, we should communicate with one another on an equal footing. And he said that democracy should not be imposed from outside. Until recently, American Presidents have said that democracy should be imposed on Iraq and other countries. He said that this was an internal affair. He spoke truly when he said that democracy cannot be imposed from outside.

So we have to be cautious. Before I make these sensitive remarks I note that the whole world has so many polarities. Listen: should we have a world of so many polarities? Can we not have nations on an equal footing? Let us have an answer. Does anyone have an answer as to whether it is better to have a world of so many polarities? Why can we not have equal standing? Should we have patriarchs? Should we have popes? Should we have gods?

Why should we have a world of so many polarities? We reject such a world and call for a world where big and small are equal.

The other sensitive point is the Headquarters of the United Nations. Can I have your attention, please? All of you came across the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, crossing the Asian continent or the African continent to reach this place. Why? Is this Jerusalem? Is this the Vatican? Is this Mecca? All of you are tired, have jet lag, have sleepless nights. You are very tired, very low, physically. Somebody just arrived now, flying 20 hours. Then we want him to make a speech and talk about this.

All of you are asleep, all of you are tired. It is clear that all of you are lacking energy because of

having to make a long journey. Why do we do that? Some of our countries are in nighttime and people are asleep. Now you should be asleep, because your biological clock, your biological mind is accustomed to be asleep at this time. I wake up at 4 o'clock New York time, before dawn, because in Libya it is 11 in the morning. When I wake up at 11 o'clock it is supposed to be daytime; at 4 o'clock I am awake.

Why? Think about it. If this was decided in 1945, should we still retain it? Why can we not think about a place that is in the middle, that is comfortable?

Another important point is that America, the host country, bears the expenses and looks after the Headquarters and diplomatic missions and looks after the peace and security of the heads of State who come here. They are very strict; they spend a lot of money, New York and all of America being very tight.

I want to relieve America of this hardship. We should thank America; we say to America, thank you for all the trouble that you have taken on yourself. We say thank you to America. We want to help reassure America and New York and keep them calm. They should not have the responsibility of looking after security. Perhaps some day a terrorist could cause an explosion or bomb a president. This place is targeted by Al-Qaida, this very building. Why was it not hit on 11 September? It was beyond their power. The next target would be this place. I am not saying this in an offhand manner. We have tens of members of Al-Qaida detained in Libyan prisons. Their confessions are very scary. That makes America live under tension. One never knows what will happen. Perhaps America or this place will be targeted again by a rocket. Perhaps tens of heads of State will die. We want to relieve America from this worry. We shall take the place to where it is not targeted.

Now after 50 years United Nations Headquarters should be taken to another part of the hemisphere. After 50 years in the western hemisphere, for the next 50 years it should be in the eastern hemisphere or in the middle hemisphere, by rotation. Now, with 64 years we have an extra 14 years over the 50 that Headquarters should have been moved to somewhere else.

This is not an insult to America; it is a service to America. We should thank America. This was possible in 1945, but we should not accept it now. Of course this should be put to the vote in the General Assembly — only in the Assembly, because in section 23 of the Headquarters Agreement it says that the United Nations Headquarters can be moved to another location only by a resolution of the General Assembly. If 51 per cent of the Assembly approve relocation of Headquarters, then it can be moved.

America has the right to make security tight because it is targeted by terrorists and by Al-Qaida. America has the right to take all security measures; we are not blaming America for that. However, we do not tolerate these measures. We do not have to come to New York and be subjected to all these measures. One president told me that he was told that his co-pilot should not come to America because there are restrictions. He asked how he could cross the Atlantic without a co-pilot. Why? He does not have to come here. Another president complained that his honour guard could not come because there was some misunderstanding regarding his name when it came to granting a visa. Another president said his own doctor could not get a visa and could not come to America.

The security measures are very strict. If a country has any problem with America, they will set up restrictions on the movements of member delegations, as if one is in Guantanamo. Is this a Member State of the United Nations, or is it a prisoner in the Guantanamo camp that cannot be allowed free movement?

This is what is submitted to the General Assembly for a vote — moving the Headquarters. If 51 per cent agree, then we come to the second vote: to the middle of the globe, or to the eastern part. If we say that we must move the Headquarters to the middle of the hemisphere, why do we not move to Sirte or Vienna? One can come even without a visa. Once you come as a president, Libya is a secure country. We are not going to restrict you to 100 or 500 metres. Libya has no hostile actions against anybody. I think the same holds true of Vienna.

If the vote says we should move Headquarters to the eastern part, then it will be Delhi or Beijing, the capital of China or the capital of India.

That is logical, my brothers. I do not think there will be any objection to that. Then you will thank me for this proposal, for eliminating the suffering and the trouble of flying 14, 15 or 20 hours to come here. No one can blame America or say that America will reduce its contributions to the United Nations. No one should

have that bad thought. America, I am sure, is committed to its international obligations. America will not be angry; it will thank you for alleviating its hardship, for taking on all that hardship and all the restrictions, even though this place is targeted by terrorists.

We come now to the issues that will be considered by the General Assembly. We are about to put the United Nations on trial; the old organization will be finished and a new one will emerge. This is not a normal gathering. Even son Obama said that this is not a normal gathering. It is a historic meeting.

The wars that took place after the establishment of the United Nations — why did they occur? Where was the Security Council, where was the Charter, where was the United Nations? There should be investigations and judicial intervention. Why have there been massacres? We can start with the Korean War because it took place after the establishment of the United Nations. How did a war break out and cause millions of victims? Nuclear weapons could have been used in that war. Those who are responsible for causing the war should be tried and should pay compensation and damages.

Then we come to the Suez Canal war of 1956. That file should be opened wide. Three countries with permanent seats on the Security Council and with the right of veto in the Council attacked a member State of this General Assembly. A country that was a sovereign State — Egypt — was attacked, its army was destroyed, thousands of Egyptians were killed and many Egyptian towns and entities were destroyed, all because Egypt wanted to nationalize the Suez Canal. How could such a thing have happened during the era of the United Nations and its Charter? How is it possible to guarantee that such a thing will not be repeated unless we make amends for past wrongs? Those were dangerous events and the Suez Canal and Korean war files should be re-opened.

Next we come to the Viet Nam war. There were 3 million victims of that war. During 12 days, more bombs were dropped than during four years of the Second World War. It was a fiercer war, and it took place after the establishment of the United Nations and after we had decided that there would be no more wars.

The future of humankind is at stake. We cannot stay silent. How can we feel safe? How can we be complacent? This is the future of the world, and we who are in the General Assembly of the United Nations must make sure that such wars are not repeated in the future.

Then Panama was attacked, even though it was an independent member State of the General Assembly. Four thousand people were killed, and the President of that country was taken prisoner and put in prison. Noriega should be released — we should open that file. How can we entitle a country that is a United Nations Member State to wage war against another country and capture its president, treat him as a criminal and put him in prison? Who would accept that? It could be repeated. We should not stay quiet. We should have an investigation. Any one of us Member States could face the same situation, especially if such aggression is by a Member State with a permanent seat on the Security Council and with the responsibility to maintain peace and security worldwide.

Then there was the war in Grenada. That country was invaded even though it was a Member State. It was attacked by 5,000 war ships, 7,000 troops and dozens of military aircraft, and it is the smallest country in the world. This occurred after the establishment of the United Nations and of the Security Council and its veto. And the President of Grenada, Mr. Maurice Bishop, was assassinated. How could that have happened with impunity? It is a tragedy. How can we guarantee that the United Nations is good or not, that a certain country is good or not? Can we be safe or happy about our future or not? Can we trust the Security Council or not? Can we trust the United Nations or not?

We must look into and investigate the bombing of Somalia. Somalia is a United Nations Member State. It is an independent country under the rule of Aidid. We want an investigation. Why did that happen? Who allowed it to happen? Who gave the green light for that country to be attacked?

Then there is the former Yugoslavia. No country was as peaceful as Yugoslavia, constructed step by step and piece by piece after being destroyed by Hitler. We destroyed it, as if we were doing the same job as Hitler. Tito built that peaceful country step by step and brick by brick and then we arrived and broke it apart for imperialistic, personal interests. How can we be complacent about that? Why can we not be satisfied? If a peaceful country like Yugoslavia faced such a tragedy, the General Assembly should have an

investigation and should decide who should be tried before the International Criminal Court.

Then we have the war in Iraq — the mother of all evils. The United Nations should also investigate that. The General Assembly, presided over by Mr. Treki, should investigate that. The invasion of Iraq was a violation of the United Nations Charter. It was done without any justification by super-Powers with permanent seats on the Security Council. Iraq is an independent country and a member State of the General Assembly. How could those countries attack Iraq? As provided for in the Charter, the United Nations should have intervened and stopped the attack.

We spoke in the General Assembly and urged it to use the Charter to stop that attack. We were against the invasion of Kuwait, and the Arab countries fought Iraq alongside foreign countries in the name of the United Nations Charter.

In the first instance, the Charter was respected. The second time when we wanted to use the Charter to stop the war against Iraq, no one used it and that document was ignored. Why did that occur? Mr. Treki and the General Assembly should investigate to determine whether there was any reason at all to invade Iraq. Because the reasons for that attack remain mysterious and ambiguous, and we might face the same destiny.

Why was Iraq invaded? The invasion itself was a serious violation of the United Nations Charter, and it was wrong. There was also a total massacre or genocide. More than 1.5 million Iraqis were killed. We want to bring the Iraqi file before the International Criminal Court (ICC), and we want those who committed mass murder against the Iraqi people to be tried.

It is easy for Charles Taylor to be tried, or for Bashir to be tried, or for Noriega to be tried. That is an easy job. Yes, but what about those who have committed mass murder against the Iraqis? They cannot be tried? They cannot go before the ICC? If the Court is unable to accommodate us, then we should not accept it. Either it is meant for all of us, large or small, or we should not accept it and should reject it.

Anyone who commits a war crime can be tried, but we are not livestock or animals like those that are slaughtered for the Eid. We have the right to live, and we are ready to fight and to defend ourselves. We have the right to live in dignity, under the sun and on earth; they have already tested us and we have withstood the test.

There are other things as well. Why is it that Iraqi prisoners of war can be sentenced to death? When Iraq was invaded and the President of Iraq was taken he was a prisoner of war. He should not have been tried; he should not have been hanged. When the war was over, he should have been released. We want to know why a prisoner of war should have been tried. Who sentenced the President of Iraq to death? Is there an answer to that question? We know the identity of the judge who tried him. As to who tied the noose around the President's neck on the day of sacrifice and hanged him, those people wore masks.

How could this have happened in a civilized world? These were prisoners of war of civilized countries under international law. How could Government ministers and a head of State be sentenced to death and hanged? Were those who tried them lawyers or members of a judicial system?

Do you know what people are saying? They are saying that the faces behind the masks were those of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and that it was they who put the President of Iraq to death.

Why do the executioners not unmask their faces? Why do we not know their ranks? Why do we not know whether they were officers, judges, soldiers or doctors? How does it come about that the President of a State Member of the United Nations was sentenced to death and killed? We do not know the identity of the executioners. The United Nations is duty-bound to answer these questions: who carried out the death sentence? They must have legal status and official responsibilities; we should know their identities and we should know about the presence of a physician and the nature of all the legal proceedings. That would be true for an ordinary citizen, let alone for the President of a State Member of the United Nations who was put to death in that manner.

My third point on the Iraq war relates to Abu Ghraib. This was a disgrace to humankind. I know that the United States authorities will investigate this scandal, but the United Nations must not ignore it either. The General Assembly should investigate this matter. Prisoners of war held in Abu Ghraib prison were torturers; dogs were set on them; men were raped.

This is unprecedented in the history of war. It was sodomy, and it was an unprecedented sin, never before committed by past aggressors or invaders. Prisoners of war are soldiers, but these were raped in prison by a State, a permanent member of the Security Council. This goes against civilization and humankind. We must not keep silent; we must know the facts. Even today, a quarter of a million Iraqi prisoners, men and women alike, remain in Abu Ghraib. They are being maltreated, persecuted and raped. There must be an investigation.

Turning to the war in Afghanistan, this too must be investigated. Why are we against the Taliban? Why are we against Afghanistan? Who are the Taliban? If the Taliban want a religious State, that is fine. Think of the Vatican. Does the Vatican pose a threat to us? No. It is a religious, very peaceful State. If the Taliban want to create an Islamic Amirate, who says that this makes them an enemy? Is anyone claiming that Bin Laden is of the Taliban or that he is Afghan? Is Bin Laden of the Taliban? No; he is not of the Taliban and he is not Afghan. Were the terrorists who hit New York City of the Taliban? Were they from Afghanistan? They were neither Taliban nor Afghan. Then, what was the reason for the wars in Iraq and in Afghanistan?

If I truly wanted to deceive my American and British friends, I would encourage them to send more troops and I would encourage them to persist in this bloodbath. But they will never succeed in Iraq or Afghanistan. Look what happened to them in Iraq, which is a desert. It is even worse in mountainous Afghanistan. If I wanted to deceive them I would tell them to continue the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But no, I want to save the citizens of the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries who are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. So I tell them: leave Afghanistan to the Afghans; leave Iraq to the Iraqis. If they want to fight each other, they are free to do so.

America had its Civil War, and no one interfered in it. There were civil wars in Spain, China and countries all over the world — no place on Earth has been free of civil wars. Let there be a civil war in Iraq. If the Iraqis want to have a civil war and fight each other, that is fine. Who says that if the Taliban form a Government they would possess intercontinental missiles or the kind of aeroplanes that hit New York? Did those aeroplanes take off from Afghanistan or Iraq? No; they took off from American airports. So why is Afghanistan being struck? The terrorists were not Afghans or Taliban or Iraqis.

Why are we silent? We must never be war devils: anyone who does not speak the truth is a silent devil. We are committed to international peace and security. We do not wish to scorn or ridicule humankind. We want to save humanity.

As President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Treki should open an investigation of the assassinations file — in addition to the war files. Who killed Patrice Lumumba, and why? We merely want to record it in the annals of African history; we want to know how an African leader, a liberator, came to be assassinated. Who killed him? We want our sons to be able to read the history of how Patrice Lumumba, the hero of Congo's liberation struggle, was assassinated. We want to know the facts, even 50 years on. That is one file that should be reopened.

And who killed Secretary-General Hammarskjöld? Who fired on his aeroplane in 1961, and why?

Then, there is the assassination of United States President Kennedy in 1963. We want to know who killed him and why. There was somebody called Lee Harvey Oswald, who was then killed by one Jack Ruby. Why did he kill him? Jack Ruby, an Israeli, killed Lee Harvey Oswald, who killed Kennedy. Why did this Israeli kill Kennedy's killer? Then Jack Ruby, the killer of the killer of Kennedy, died in mysterious circumstances before he could be tried. We must open the files. The whole world knows that Kennedy wanted to investigate the Israeli Dimona nuclear reactor. This involves international peace and security and weapons of mass destrucion. That is why we should open this file.

Then there is the assassination of Martin Luther King, the black reverend and human rights activist. His assassination was a plot, and we should know why he was killed and who killed him.

Then Khalil Wazir, or Abu Jihad, a Palestinian, was attacked. He was living peacefully in Tunisia, a Member State, and that country's sovereignty was not respected. We cannot keep silent. Even though submarines and ships were detected along the coast of Tunisia, where he was killed, no one was accused or tried. Abu Iyad was also killed, and we should know how he was killed. He was killed in ambiguous circumstances. In Operation Spring of Youth, Kamal

Nasser, a poet, Kamal Adwan and Abu Youssef al-Najjar, three Palestinians, were killed in Lebanon, a country that is a free, sovereign State member of the General Assembly. They were attacked and killed while sleeping peacefully. We should know who killed them, and he should be tried so that those crimes against humanity are not repeated.

We have already talked about the size of the force used in the invasion of Grenada — 7,000 troops, 15 battleships and dozens of bombers — and President Bishop was killed even though Grenada was a Member State. Those are crimes, and we cannot keep silent. Otherwise, we will look like sacrificial beasts. We are not animals. Year after year, we are attacked. We defend ourselves, our sons and our children, and we are not afraid. We have the right to live, and the Earth is not destined for violence, but for us all. We can never live on this Earth in such humiliation. So those are the wars.

The last file is that of the massacres. In the Sabra and Shatila massacre, 3,000 people were killed. That area, under the protection of the occupying Israeli army, was the site of a huge and calamitous massacre in which 3,000 Palestinian men, women and children were killed. How can we keep quiet? Lebanon is a sovereign State; a member of the General Assembly was occupied, Sabra and Shatila were under Israeli control, and then the massacre took place.

Then there was the 2008 massacre in Gaza. There were 1,000 women and 2,200 children among the victims killed in the massacre in Gaza in 2008. Sixty United Nations facilities and another 30 belonging to non-governmental organizations were damaged. Fifty clinics were destroyed. Forty doctors and nurses were killed while carrying out humanitarian activities. This took place in Gaza in December 2008.

The perpetrators are still alive, and they should be tried by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Should we try only the underdogs, the weak and the poor of third-world countries, and not important and protected figures? Under international law, they should all face trial for the consequences of the crimes that they have committed. Otherwise, the role of the ICC will never be recognized. If the decisions of the ICC are not respected or implemented, if the General Assembly and the Security Council mean nothing, and if the International Atomic Energy Agency serves only certain countries and organizations, then what is the United Nations? It would mean that the United Nations is nothing and is insignificant. Where is it? There is no United Nations.

Then, while piracy may be a phenomenon of the high seas, a form of terrorism, we talk about the piracy in Somalia. Somalis are not pirates. We are the pirates. We went there and usurped their economic zones, their fish and their wealth. Libya, India, Japan and America — any country in the world — we are all pirates. We all entered the territorial waters and economic zones of Somalia and stole. The Somalis are protecting their own fish, their sustenance. They have become pirates because they are defending their children's food. Now, we seek to address that matter in the wrong way. Should we send warships to Somalia? We should send warships to the pirates who have attacked and seized the economic zones and wealth of the Somalis and the food of their children.

I met the pirates, and I told them that I would negotiate an agreement between them and the international community that respects the 200-mile exclusive economic zone under the law of the sea, that protects all marine resources belonging to the Somali people, and that stops all countries from disposing of toxic waste along the Somali coast. In return, the Somalis would no longer attack ships. We will propose and draft such an international treaty and submit it to the General Assembly. That is the solution. The solution does not lie in sending more military ships to fight the Somalis. That is not the solution.

We are addressing the phenomena of piracy and terrorism in the wrong way. Today there is swine flu. Perhaps tomorrow there will be fish flu, because sometimes we produce viruses by controlling them. It is a commercial business. Capitalist companies produce viruses so that they can generate and sell vaccinations. That is very shameful and poor ethics. Vaccinations and medicine should not be sold. In *The Green Book*, I maintain that medicines should not be sold or subject to commercialization. Medicines should be free of charge and vaccinations given free to children, but capitalist companies produce the viruses and vaccinations and want to make a profit. Why are they not free of charge? We should give them free of charge, and not sell them. The entire world should strive to protect our people, create and manufacture vaccinations and give them free to children and women, and not profit by them. All those items are on

the agenda of the General Assembly, which has only to exercise that duty.

The Ottawa Convention on Landmines forbids the production of landmines. That is wrong. Landmines are defensive weapons. If I place them along the border of my country and someone wants to invade me, they may be killed. That is all right, because they are invading me. The Convention should be reconsidered. I am not taking that defensive weapon to another country. The enemy is coming to me. On the Al-Qadhafi website, I call for that treaty to be modified or annulled. This treaty should be modified or annulled. I want to use anti-personnel mines to defend my home against invasion. Eliminate weapons of mass destruction, not landmines, which are defensive weapons.

With regard to the Palestinian situation, the two-State solution is impossible; it is not practical. Currently, these two States completely overlap. Partition is doomed to failure. These two States are not neighbours; they are coextensive, in terms of both population and geography. A buffer zone cannot be created between the two States because there are half a million Israeli settlers in the West Bank and a million Arab Palestinians in the territory known as Israel.

The solution is therefore a democratic State without religious fanaticism or ethnicity. The generation of Sharon and Arafat is over. We need a new generation, in which everyone can live in peace. Look at Palestinian and Israeli youth; they both want peace and democracy, and they want to live under one State. This conflict poisons the world.

The White Book actually has the solution; I hold it here. The solution is Isratine. Arabs have no hostility or animosity towards Israel. We are cousins and of the same race. We want to live in peace. The refugees should go back.

You are the ones who brought the Holocaust upon the Jews. You, not we, are the ones who burned them. We gave them refuge. We gave them safe haven during the Roman era and the Arab reign in Andalusia and during the rule of Hitler. You are the ones who poisoned them; you are the ones who annihilated them. We provided them with protection. You expelled them. Let us see the truth. We are not hostile; we are not enemies of the Jews. And one day the Jews will need the Arabs. At that point, Arabs will be the ones to give them protection, to save them, as we have done in the past. Look at what everybody else did to the Jews. Hitler is an example. You are the ones who hate the Jews, not us.

In brief, Kashmir should be an independent State, neither Indian nor Pakistani. We must end that conflict. Kashmir should be a buffer State between India and Pakistan.

With regard to Darfur, I truly hope that the assistance provided by international organizations can be used for development projects, for agriculture, for industry and for irrigation. You are the ones who made it a crisis; you put it on the altar; you wanted to sacrifice Darfur so that you could interfere in its internal affairs.

You have turned the Hariri problem into a United Nations problem. You are selling Hariri's corpse. You just want to settle scores with Syria. Lebanon is an independent State; it has laws, courts, a judiciary and police. At this stage, it is no longer the perpetrators that are being sought; the real wish is to settle scores with Syria, not ensure justice for Hariri. The cases of Khalil al-Wazir, Lumumba, Kennedy, and Hammarskjöld should also have been turned over to the United Nations, if the Hariri case merits such attention.

The General Assembly is now under the presidency of Libya. This is our right. Libya hopes that you will assist in making the transition from a world fraught with crises and tension to a world in which humanity, peace and tolerance prevail. I will personally follow up on this issue with the General Assembly, President Treki and the Secretary-General. It is not our habit to compromise when it comes to the destiny of humanity and the struggles of the third world and the 100 small nations, which should live in peace always.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, King of African Kings, for the statement he has just made.

Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi, Leader of the Revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Museveni: Before I deliver the statement I have prepared I should like to support one aspect of the long speech made by the Chairman of the African Union, brother Muammar Al-Qadhafi, which touched on so many issues, and that is reform of the United Nations system and fairer representation for the African Union in the Security Council. That is an African position and I support it.

It is said in the Holy Bible, in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter I, verses 2 and 3, that it was an 11-day journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea on the border of Canaan, yet it took the Israelites, coming out of slavery in Egypt, some 40 years to complete it. It was a journey of only 11 days, but it took them 40 years.

In Deuteronomy, chapter VIII, verse 2, it also says:

> "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not".

Similarly, Africa, especially black Africa, has been wandering in the desert of underdevelopment for much of the 40 years following independence. As it says in the Book of Common Prayer, one cannot help but wonder whether it was because we had "left undone those things which we ought to have done", and we had "done those things which we ought not to have done", and there was "no truth in us". On the other hand, the Asian countries — South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, India, et cetera — did not similarly wander in the desert of underdevelopment. That is not to mention the People's Republic of China.

Fortunately, in the past 15 to 20 years, Africans have also grasped the development compass. We have started to do what we had left undone for a long time, and the truth is now beginning to be in us. Uganda's economy has grown at a rate of 6.5 per cent per annum for the past 23 years. During the last financial year, Uganda's rate of growth was 7 per cent, in spite of the global recession, which affected us all. In the current financial year of 2009-2010, our rate of growth will be in excess of 7 per cent. In the financial year 2007-2008, our rate of growth was 9.8 per cent, before adjusting for inflation.

We achieved these reasonable rates of growth despite the fact that we have not yet dealt decisively with three strategic infrastructure elements: electricity, roads and railways. While we have achieved peace, macroeconomic stability, education for all, some aspects of health for all, economic integration in the region, international market access, democratization and scientific research, we have been slow on these three: electricity, roads and railways. This slowness was the result of dependence on foreign funding, which tends to be frivolous and erratic. We depended on foreign funding because our tax collections were initially very low, but they have now grown in tandem with the growth of the economy.

Uganda is, therefore, now able to fund road, rail and electricity projects on its own, although of course we welcome foreign investment. We can no longer, however, be held to ransom by foreign funding for those vital foundational elements of infrastructure. It is amazing and, indeed, shameful to see the low levels of electrification in Africa. In the United States, kilowatt-hours per capita are 14,124. In Africa, on the other hand, the figure is only 547 kilowatt-hours per capita. Some African countries have as low as 9 kilowatt-hours per capita. How could we expect growth and transformation in such a situation?

The whole of Africa needs to wake up on this issue and cooperate to find a solution. The same goes for our high transport costs due to poor roads and poor or non-existent railways. In China, it costs $12 to transport a ton of cargo between Beijing and Shanghai by rail. In East Africa, on the other hand, transporting the same cargo over a comparable distance would require $65. We are aware of these bottlenecks, and we are dealing with them one by one.

There are two other bottlenecks that we often talk about: the export of raw materials, and the failure to transform subsistence and traditional farming into modernized agriculture. The haemorrhage that is the export of raw materials, for which we get only 10 per

cent of the final processed product, has been recognized by many of us as modern slavery.

In Uganda we are transforming traditional subsistence agriculture into modern agriculture. This involves using improved seeds, fertilizers, tractors, irrigation, breeding stock and agricultural practices. However, we know that we cannot do all of this sustainably if we continue to neglect the environment.

Therefore, our development and transformation manifesto and action plan in Uganda entails the following: peace; democracy; education for all; health for all; macroeconomic stability and economic liberalization; electricity generation and distribution to banish the very low levels of kilowatt-hours per capita; modernization of roads; rebuilding and modernization of railways; commercialization and modernization of agriculture away from traditional subsistence farming; adding value to our agricultural and mineral products instead of just exporting raw materials, including petroleum and gas; regional integration to widen markets as well as accessing international markets; environmental protection; and scientific research — we are already supporting a quantity of innovative research by Ugandan scientists.

Ugandans and other Africans in our region who have been chronically underconsuming in the past are now helping our economy to stay afloat in spite of the global recession, because they now have greater capacity to purchase what we produce. Their consumption is going up, thus supporting our regionally oriented industries. We think that we have at last graduated from wandering in the desert of underdevelopment and are now marching towards socio-economic transformation. We are finally doing that which we ought to have done and the truth, this time, is in us. The phase of what the French scholar René Dumont called "a false start" in Africa, or, in this case, Uganda, is over. We are entering the phase of growth and transformation. Thus, we believe, our economy will soon take off.

Thus, Uganda's response to the global crisis has been fair, because of regional trade. It would have been fairer if we had already dealt with the three infrastructure elements I have talked about: roads, electricity and railways. This would have enabled us to lower the costs of doing business in Uganda and, thus, increase the profitability of enterprises.

Africa has great potential for growth that is not tapped. The current global crisis was caused by certain laxities in the management of some of the economies of the world. Those laxities need to be rectified through multilateral action, as some heads of State have already noted. We need to stop money-laundering and strengthen regulation. Multilateral action would also be welcome in unlocking the dormant potential of Africa. In the case of Uganda and many other African countries, we have a double challenge: first, the struggle to transform our economies from a pre-industrial to a modern state; secondly, to cope with the problems caused by others, such as the present global financial crisis and environmental degradation.

There are, however, a few questions I keep asking myself. Is the present profligacy of some of the developed countries sustainable if we all join in that lifestyle? Or was it only possible when a tiny minority of humanity was enjoying affluence? Is there a need for a more rational modern lifestyle?

The need for dialogue among civilizations is long overdue. That dialogue could help us deal with some of the headaches and dilemmas confronted by humanity.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to thank the President of the Republic of Uganda for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Amir of the State of Qatar.

His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Sheikh Al-Thani (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to

the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. I wish you every success in your task.

I would also like to thank your predecessor, my friend Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, for his tireless work during the previous session.

I would also like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his effort to strengthen the role of the United Nations.

This new session of the General Assembly coincides with a unique international situation — one of those situations that take shape at a critical juncture of major historical developments. Such situations present an opportunity to lay foundations, stress principles and regulate systems of international interaction and relations.

In our view, the present situation is similar to those that prevailed on the eve of the conferences of Vienna (1814), Versailles (1919) and Potsdam (1945).

This situation, and the opportunity it presents in today's world, is fertile ground for embarking on a search for a different future. It comes in the wake of a period of violent turmoil in which the world was burned by the fires of World War II, was bitten by the frost of the cold war, and went adrift — especially after the 11 September 2001 tragedy — in the fallout from the war on terrorism. This was followed by the financial market crisis just last year.

The succession of major developments has altered the world map, changed the balance of power and influence, and brought in capable parties from Europe, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. It has also generated a renewal-seeking movement in the United States of America that we are following with interest and we sincerely hope will succeed.

We note that during the stages of the global confrontation and polarization, and the significant turmoil that followed both of them, the international community lived in, and suffered from, severe confusion, when it became clear that achieving world peace and prosperity required more than the weapons of the mighty Powers, more than a bipolarity of States, more than the hegemony of one country — no matter how advanced that country might be — and a broader and more comprehensive global management of urgent crises.

In such a situation, the significance of the opportunity looms large, after long years of firestorms, snow blizzards and dust storms, signalling to us that the world requires something new. In fact, that obvious fact stands out against the background of our harsh prior experience.

However, we have been failing to pay attention to it, despite the numerous appeals pointing to it and the sincere attempts calling for renewal so that the Organization can fulfil its mission in changing times and remain a standard and reference of international legitimacy. This requirement for change covers the whole of the United Nations system with all its branches and agencies.

It is clear to us that the serious crises of the world were exacerbated when nations with major influence in the international order decided to transfer tackling the most important issues of war, peace and progress from the United Nations framework to other extraneous frameworks.

Such was the case with regard to conventional and nuclear arms, security agreements and arrangements covering the broad spectrum from outer space to policy and economics. The reasons given for going outside the United Nations framework were, as some believed, that such issues were beyond the capability of the smaller States that represent the majority of United Nations Members.

Thus, according to this approach, the absence of the smaller States would make dealing with the issues at hand easier. But in the emerging circumstances and realities, those who advocate the monopolizing of international decision-making need to realize that we live in one world. And in a world like this one, concern is equal, even though the distribution of power may not be.

This attitude represents for us a confirmation of our view, by which we stand firm. Namely, that it is time to go back to the United Nations system as a framework that accommodates everyone, provides a venue recognized by all, and has a Charter accepted by all nations mindful that equal rights do not run counter to a division of responsibilities which takes into account the different levels of capability of the parties.

We are aware and appreciative of the great importance of an overarching international authority as expressed by a legitimate international order and

governed by a Charter, by the law, and by an experience of a harsh and bloody political history. That appreciation stems from our intimate familiarity with the crises and complex situations of the Middle East, which became intertwined and increasingly ominous when addressed outside the United Nations framework, on the assumption that the new setting could yield swifter and more effective solutions. In fact, that approach was merely an aimless diversion that only caused greater confusion and complexity.

Resorting to the authority of the United Nations is essential not only to resolve intractable crises such as the ones in the Middle East, but also to realize aspirations that can be fulfilled only through a legitimate international consensus and within an agreed framework. One such pressing crisis is the quest for alternative energy sources. Another equally urgent issue is that of climate change and its definite impact on the environment and life on this planet.

As for the issue of energy, while it would seem that oil-producing countries are benefiting from continued world dependence on their oil production, I wish to stress to the Assembly that we consider global security to be our security and global prosperity to be our prosperity. There can be neither peace nor prosperity when global civilization is threatened by an energy crisis that is far greater than a war of any kind, even a nuclear war.

With regard to the issue of climate change, I should like to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for having organized the Summit on Climate Change yesterday within the framework of the United Nations to discuss this most serious challenge, which threatens not only the security of the planet but also all life on it.

We believe that, while the United Nations system comprises a comprehensive range of institutions, those institutions require urgent renewal and strengthening so that United Nations work will be commensurate with the new realities in the community of nations on all continents. At this session, we face a historic situation — an opportunity that does not present itself very often. It is the duty of the international community, and in particular of its powerful members, to shoulder their responsibilities by responding to that opportunity.

Almighty God has blessed the State of Qatar with vast hydrocarbon resources, including the giant North Gas Field, whose resources make Qatar the third-largest country in the world in terms of natural gas reserves. Since the Field was discovered, the Government has sought to develop concepts and plans for projects to supply the local market with gas and to export liquefied natural gas to world markets, as well as for the gas-to-liquid process, petrochemical industries and other projects using natural gas, whose consumption is less harmful to the environment than that of other fossil substances. While the State of Qatar has sufficient reserves to meet its needs for decades to come, we are fully aware of the future challenges facing the international community in terms of the implications of greenhouse gas emissions, climate change and their negative effects on sustainable development projects.

The State of Qatar is aware of the enormous potential of clean and renewable energy sources — in particular solar energy, which is abundantly available in our climate. The Government has encouraged our industries, educational institutions and scientific research centres to develop renewable energy technologies that will help to improve efficiency and performance and are suited to local conditions.

The State of Qatar looks forward to a more intensive international effort to share information and expertise in the development of solar and other renewable energies. We urge developed countries to share modern technologies in that area and to contribute to the implementation and financing of renewable energy projects throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Amir of the State of Qatar for the statement he has just made.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The President: I should like to announce that, in accordance with a decision taken at the 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, the Assembly will exhaust the list of speakers for this morning's meeting before we begin the plenary meeting scheduled for this afternoon.

Address by Mr. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, President of Turkmenistan

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Turkmenistan.

Mr. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, President of Turkmenistan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, President of Turkmenistan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Berdymukhammedov (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the people and the Government of Turkmenistan, I heartily welcome and congratulate you, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, on the opening of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly and on your election as President of the Assembly and express my confidence that, under your leadership, this body will work successfully and fruitfully. I should also like to thank Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his skilful and effective work in that post.

The current state of global realities and the nature of and trends in today's political, economic and social processes objectively require closer and more coordinated interaction between States and major international organizations if we are to accomplish our common main goals: achieving world peace and security, creating conditions for further development and progress, and protecting the legal and moral foundations of today's world order.

The level of effectiveness of such interaction, striking a reasonable balance between national interests and the interests of the entire international community, will greatly determine how successfully we resolve equally important global problems with regard to the ecology, energy, food, issues of fair distribution of water resources, effectiveness in fighting poverty and infectious diseases, countering the drug threat and many other challenges.

It is impossible to talk about achieving these goals without acknowledging and confirming the critical role of the United Nations. For more than 60 years the Organization has been the main guarantor in maintaining and supporting universal peace, security and development. During that time, our Organization has won great credibility in the world, accumulating unique experience in resolving difficult international problems and forging a firm legal foundation for cooperation between States.

The United Nations was and remains the underpinning of today's world order, a pole of attraction of the hopes and aspirations of all mankind. In the present conditions it is the United Nations that must become a pillar in the constructive activity of States in building a just and harmonized system of international relations.

It is from this angle that Turkmenistan considers issues of United Nations reform. We realize that on a number of aspects our Organization needs improvement and greater effectiveness to meet today's needs. That is a normal and logical process in line with the logic of contemporary dynamic world development. Therefore we are for a rational reform of the United Nations. We will achieve that only by further strengthening it and steadily consolidating its position in the international system, expanding its role and functions as a guarantor of global peace, stability and development.

We are confident that United Nations reform must be sensible, targeted and related to the real needs of the international community. Turkmenistan supports efforts of Member States and of the Secretary-General aimed at making the Organization's work more dynamic, more effective, more open and more democratic. In this context, Turkmenistan shares the view on the need to further improve the structure of the Security Council, creating closer and effective interaction between the Council and the General Assembly.

The main goal of our foreign policy remains the same: comprehensive assistance to the world community in its efforts to support and strengthen a global security system, to warn of and neutralize threats of conflict and to provide conditions for stable and sustainable development of States and peoples and for broad and constructive international cooperation.

In this regard, we believe that the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan and the related consequences of its legal status give the community of nations good practical opportunities to positively impact the course and nature of processes under way in Central Asia and the region of the Caspian basin. That means creating here permanently functioning mechanisms of international contacts for discussing

various aspects of regional problems and working out mutually acceptable and consensual decisions. Based on available experience and on political and diplomatic peacemaking under United Nations auspices, Turkmenistan states that it is ready to provide the world community with all the necessary political and logistical conditions for that activity.

In this context we consider exceptionally important and promising the decision of the United Nations in 2007 on opening the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, with its headquarters in Ashgabat. The Centre now works actively on monitoring and analysing regional problems. It participates in various measures concerning most important development issues in Central Asia, including at the level of heads of State, and helps to craft approaches for resolving those issues. Turkmenistan welcomes the involvement of various States, international organizations, financial and economic institutions and experts in United Nations efforts to draw up constructive models of development for regional processes.

In formulating our approaches to the problems of universal security, our view is that the concept is integral and indivisible, both geopolitically and from the standpoint of specific aspects. We are certain that security in one country cannot be guaranteed when security is lacking in the region, on the continent or in the world. Similarly, political or military security cannot be long term and fully fledged without guaranteeing economic, energy and food security, without preventing and mitigating the risks and threats of a man-made ecological problem, or without effectively combating international terrorism, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or other global challenges.

From this point of view, one of the most urgent components of global security is energy security. First and foremost, that is because the current system of international energy has become a vulnerable link in the world economy. That vulnerability is due to a number of reasons: political instability in some parts of the planet, a lack of commonly recognized international legal mechanisms, incomplete infrastructure and pipeline routes that are geographically limited. All of that affects the common atmosphere in the world energy supply market. There is an objective need to change this situation, to overcome inertia of stereotypes and to reach a new level of thinking that corresponds to modern demands.

Today, we talk not about adopting certain preventive measures or about local agreements on some aspects of fuel transport, but about the creation of principally new, universal models of relations in the realm of world energy, models that are based on a multilateral balance of interests, the coinciding of opinions and concepts on the global architecture of energy security and an awareness of the long-term benefits and advantages of cooperation.

It seems logical to begin international discussion of the problem of energy supplies as a first step in this direction. The discussion needs to find lines of coincidence of interests, to determine initial positions, to generate common language to carry on a dialogue — in other words, to create the basis for substantial and effective cooperation.

Therefore, during the previous session of the General Assembly, Turkmenistan announced an initiative to develop universal mechanisms that could guarantee reliable and secure functioning of the international energy supply infrastructure and provide for access to it and its effective use. A first step in that direction was resolution 63/210, entitled "Reliable and stable transit of energy and its role in ensuring sustainable development and international cooperation", which was adopted by consensus on 19 December 2008 on Turkmenistan's initiative. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all States for their support for our initiative and for their responsible and constructive position on this issue.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In line with the letter and the spirit of the resolution, Turkmenistan proposed the convening, with the support of the United Nations, of a high-level international conference on the theme "Reliable and stable transit of energy and its role in securing stable development and international cooperation". That conference took place in Ashgabat in April 2009, and one of its outcomes was the proposal to request the United Nations to establish a group of experts to make recommendations on a possible international legal document on the subject that takes into account proposals by interested countries and international organizations. Turkmenistan is prepared to fully support the setting up of such a group in the framework

of the United Nations. We call upon all interested States to provide proposals for its programme of work. We believe that the establishment of such a group could be the first step in the process of drafting a comprehensive United Nations document aimed at securing the effective functioning of the international energy supply system.

Support for the process of disarmament, reducing weapons arsenals — including, first and foremost, weapons of mass destruction — and preventing proliferation continue to be among the most important issues on the international agenda. We believe that in the current system of international relations there should be no room for either the legacy of the cold war or for the recurrence of bloc confrontation, under which the quantity and quality of armaments were almost the sole criteria for establishing the influence and authority of States. We are convinced that the fewer weapons there are in the world, the more stable and calm will be its development and the more trust and understanding there will be among countries and peoples.

As the Assembly is aware, the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia was signed in 2006 in the city of Semipalatinsk. All countries of the region have now become parties to the Treaty. This joint initiative has proved to be consonant with the aspirations of the majority of the world's countries. It has been highly praised by the international community and endorsed by the General Assembly. In that regard, we believe that it would be timely to hold an international conference, during the first half of next year, on the subject of disarmament in the Central Asian region and the Caspian Basin. Our country is prepared to host such an event. We would also welcome constructive proposals from the international community, including from individual States, on how to help global disarmament processes and on how to effectively address issues pertaining to our participation in the implementation of such proposals.

One of the most serious challenges in today's world is how to effectively combat such phenomena as international terrorism, illegal drug trafficking and cross-border organized crime. For a variety of reasons, those problems are of particular importance for our region. We are convinced that only through joint efforts by States working in close cooperation with international organizations will we be able to successfully face those threats. Turkmenistan believes that the United Nations has a special role to play in that regard. We believe that it is both necessary and timely to reinvigorate the participation of the United Nations and its agencies in developing and coordinating effective models for international cooperation aimed at neutralizing those threats and putting in place mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and the establishment of conditions for the post-conflict reconstruction of economic and social infrastructure.

In that connection, we must underscore the special importance that Turkmenistan attaches to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and to the establishment of lasting peace on Afghan soil. Our country provides assistance to Afghanistan for economic, social and humanitarian projects. That work will continue. We want to see Afghanistan as a peaceful and prosperous country that is a good neighbour and partner for all States in the region.

At the same time, we believe that the United Nations can and should play an important role in resolving the issue of Afghanistan. We are convinced that, with its enormous peacemaking experience and great moral authority, the United Nations is capable of proposing new formats and models in the context of political and diplomatic efforts to resolve Afghanistan's problems and establish peace and harmony in that country. That work could today be done more energetically and efficiently, given the potential of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. We support increased focused involvement by the Regional Centre in the international community's efforts to resolve the situation in Afghanistan.

The international community's awareness of long-term development objectives and its readiness to work jointly to achieve them are today prerequisites for the stability of the entire system of international relations. The serious effects of the global financial and economic crisis have once again clearly demonstrated the need to join efforts in developing an international security architecture and establishing the conditions for equal and fair relations between States and peoples on the basis of recognized international legal norms and the timeless ideals of the United Nations.

Turkmenistan believes that responsibility, morality and humanism will be the criteria by which present and future generations will assess our work. As a State and as a member of the world community we

will further contribute to strengthening lofty principles in international affairs while consistently implementing our philosophy of Turkmen neutrality, a fundamental part of which includes our strategic cooperation with the United Nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of Turkmenistan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, President of Turkmenistan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Chile.

Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President Bachelet Jeria (*spoke in Spanish*): For the past four years, I have been proud to represent my country in this Assembly, the world's foremost assembly, the forum in which the peoples have placed so many hopes. Peace, human rights, international law, development: these are some of the causes promoted here, sometimes successfully and at other times with difficulty, but always with progress. This has been observed by the poorest in various regions; it has been observed by children and women; it has been observed by the persecuted, by those who suffer; it has been observed by men and women all over the globe.

It is true that the efforts have not sufficed to eradicate all the injustice or the abuses or the sorrows of so many. But it is also true that we have made considerable progress in six decades of international collaboration. The rule of law and the institutional framework have been strengthened, so that humanity today has the technical, legal and economic means to make much more progress in the struggle for a better world.

We cannot let those hopes be dashed. But at times this is what we seem to be doing. The world is experiencing a serious economic crisis resulting from the inability of countries and of the international community to formulate clear and transparent rules on financial matters.

We are on the brink of a serious environmental crisis resulting from emissions of greenhouse gases and from the way the world has chosen to produce and obtain energy — as well as from the inability of countries to agree on standards and policies to prevent global warming.

Even more serious, in the twenty-first century we see more than a billion people suffering from hunger: one out of six people all over the world, 50 million of them in Latin America. This is much more than a statistic: it is a child, it is a mother dying in a poor county despite the opulence in which the developed countries are living.

Trillions of dollars have been spent in recent months to rescue the financial system and revitalize the economy. Yet the World Food Programme will see its budget reduced by more than half this year. What a sad paradox this is. Less than 0.1 per cent of the financial rescue plans would end the food crisis affecting dozens of countries. I should like today to raise my voice and urge that this item be put on the agenda of this Assembly, the forthcoming meetings of the Group of 20 and, in general, all international forums.

The economic collapse must not lead to a social collapse. We must not let down our guard, for it is not acceptable that, on the pretext of the economic crisis, countries should be reducing contributions for the fight against hunger, for the protection of the environment or for the promotion of development.

And it is ethically untenable that, while this is happening, the executives of the investment banks that were at the centre of the current crisis, gambling irresponsibly with financial assets, should today be back to business as usual and awarding themselves huge bonuses which simply reward excessive risk-taking in their bets. They are even considering establishing companies to place their bonuses in tax havens.

The world simply cannot function in this way. Resignation is not an option. It is possible to construct fairer, realistic, sustainable and pragmatic models to

ensure progressive advancement for all peoples. That requires recognition that the economic crisis was not a casual occurrence or, still less, a cyclical event in the capitalist economy that will correct itself on its own, solely through the workings of the invisible hand of the market.

What happened here was much more than a chance occurrence or a cycle. What happened here was the crisis of a paradigm, the crisis of a certain kind of globalization, the crisis of a conception of the State and the public sector in which the State is seen as the problem and not the solution. In this conception, it is thought that the more the economy is deregulated, the better it is. In this conception there are misgivings about democratic discussion as to which goods should be public and should therefore enjoy efficient protection and government guarantees.

It is this extreme and dogmatic neo-liberalism that has unfortunately erupted into crisis, unfortunately leaving in its wake a trail of hunger, unemployment and, above all, injustice.

And it is at times like this that action by the public sector has proved to be essential. Thanks to decisive action by States, it has been possible to avoid a widespread and fatal economic collapse with unexpected political consequences — which could have been another Great Depression.

The whole dogma of laissez-faire was forgotten when the time came for the State to save the international financial machinery and implement financial stimulus plans.

In some countries — including my own — State action proved crucial in mitigating effects and protecting the most vulnerable in crisis situations. In my country, we were careful with commodity wealth some years ago and saved resources for more difficult times, resisting political pressure to spend that money but confident that this was the responsible thing to do. We were proved to be right, and this has allowed us to offset the effects of the international crisis while increasing social benefits for people, raising pensions, protecting workers, building hospitals and investing more than ever before in education and housing for those most in need.

Countries such as Chile learned the lessons of past crises and are facing this crisis with solid macroeconomic foundations, with far better capitalized banking systems and with stricter and more effective regulations.

But this was not the case everywhere. It is worth recalling that after the Asian crisis a decade ago, there was much talk about financial system reforms, better oversight mechanisms and early warning systems. But none of this happened. Political laziness prevailed. Private interests prevailed over the public good. That is why today reform cannot wait, either domestically, with better regulations in the capital market, or abroad.

We hope that General Assembly resolutions and the forthcoming meeting of the Group of 20 will make progress in this direction because — I insist — resignation is not an option. We know that at this stage neither rhetoric nor populism can be of help. There must be no flights of fancy, and we must remain open to the opportunities that well conducted globalization can provide.

We must find effective mechanisms to safeguard the public interest in the world of national and international finance. We must find solutions to unlock a world trade agreement that will thwart protectionist designs. And we must return multilateral dialogue to the centre of international policy, abandoning unilateralism.

While unbridled globalization in the financial sphere provoked the crisis we are experiencing, unilateral action and disdain for institutions resulted in conflicts that must not be repeated. Military or economic might cannot be the norm in international relations. Institutions and the rule of law must prevail, since this is the only way to ensure peace and development.

Thus, Chile strongly supports the reform and strengthening of the United Nations. We support the Organization's recent efforts in the areas of human rights, development and climate change. We favour reform and enlargement of the Security Council. We welcome the important work being done by the Peacebuilding Commission to provide support from the outset to countries emerging from conflict — support that is comprehensive, not only military.

That is the logic that should prevail in all spheres. We want the United Nations to spearhead a new global social covenant, we want the Millennium Development Goals to be attained by 2015 and we want to see

forceful and decisive involvement to mitigate climate change.

We have spoken about climate change at special meetings during this session. Today I wish simply to sound the alarm. Unless we coordinate efforts at the highest level, the forthcoming Copenhagen Conference will not attain its goal. We risk failure on what is the most urgent cause to be taken up by the world at this time when the scientific forecasts made by the Intergovernmental Panel in 2007 already seem to fall short of the mark.

Climate change is not a theory; it is a tangible reality that we are witnessing in unusual storms, floods and droughts. My country, which is so close to Antarctica, is watching in amazement as melting of the glaciers and ice platforms on that continent accelerates at an inexorable pace.

The industrialized countries must adopt quantifiable goals for more ambitious emission reductions than those that now exist. If they assume their historical responsibility with deeds, and not only words, and if they undertake to provide the necessary technological and financial support, then the developing world will be able to make an even greater effort to meet this challenge.

We thus have the possibility to correct the course of our future. Let us not use the economic crisis as an excuse for not reaching an agreement that all our citizens are demanding. Let us today ensure the future of our descendants. We have a huge responsibility. For this reason, let us lay the foundations this year, in Copenhagen, for a new economy that will allow the twenty-first century to be an era of progress.

If there is one lesson that we can learn from the economic crisis and from the environmental crisis, it is that the quality of policy matters. Neither the world nor countries are governed on automatic pilot, trailing behind the market, trailing behind globalization, trailing behind social changes. The policy of quality has a positive impact on the well-being of individuals.

The rule of law, civil liberties and respect for human rights are all prerequisites for a democracy of quality. There is no longer any justification for violating the principle of liberty and democracy in the name of justice or equality. Procedural democracy is part of the ethical and political common property of the international community in the twenty-first century. And little by little, we have started to reinforce this principle at the level of nations.

My region, Latin America, has been able gradually to build a single vision, which has enabled it, for example, to come rapidly to the aid of any threatened democracy, as was the case in Bolivia one year ago, or to strongly condemn democratic setbacks, such as occurred in Honduras a few months ago. For this reason, today, with President Zelaya — who has peacefully returned to Honduras — I wish to reiterate our appeal for immediate acceptance of the San José agreement promoted by the Organization of American States. Honduras deserves free and democratic elections, with the constitutional President leading this process.

It is thus clear that policy is now more important than ever. Let us make an effort to restore it to its rightful place, but, of course, with the quality that citizens deserve.

What has happened with the crisis, with the environment, with hunger, with conflicts, is the result of a lack of adequate leadership and political dialogue. It is for us, leaders of our countries, to change this situation. It is within our power, first, not to resign ourselves to the market or to force and, secondly, to avoid demagogy by trying to construct a fairer order for our peoples through serious and responsible public policies, in an environment of full democracy and respect for human rights.

This can be the basis for a global social covenant, which the world is insistently demanding at this difficult time. We must not fail the world.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Chile for the statement she has just made.

Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Vázquez (*spoke in Spanish*): As I did four years ago (see A/60/PV.6), I once again extend the greetings of the people and the Government of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay to this forum, which is the most broadly representative body of today's world.

Those of us here are aware of the contrasting realities of the present world; we are conscious that never before has humanity simultaneously been offered so many possibilities and faced so many threats as is the case today. We know that we cannot be indifferent to or be paralysed by those possibilities and threats; nor are we disposed to be, but what are we doing to dissipate the threats and take advantage of the opportunities presented by this reality? Surely not everything we would like to or that we deem necessary, and perhaps not all that we are capable of.

Concerning this task, the Eastern Republic of Uruguay once again reaffirms its unwavering respect for international law, which is the greatest guarantee for the sovereignty of peoples and their peaceful coexistence. We also reiterate, first, our firm rejection of the threat of the use of force or of its use, of terrorism, drug trafficking and all types of violence and discrimination. Secondly, we repeat our determined support for a peaceful solution to conflicts, to the sovereign equality of States, to non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, to the self-determination of peoples, to international cooperation in economic and social matters, and to multilateralism that also includes free trade, because protectionism is to commerce as authoritarianism is to democracy.

Thirdly, we reiterate our steadfast commitment to the advancement and protection of human rights, because they constitute the ethics of liberty and democracy and are aspects of the dignity that we need, much as we need the air we breathe almost without being conscious of it.

Fourthly, we repeat our unwavering responsibility in the protection of the environment as a human right and as a fundamental aspect of achieving truly sustainable development.

As Americans, we feel it is our ethical duty and political responsibility to reiterate in this global forum that, first, we reject the institutional rupture in the fraternal Republic of Honduras, and we demand the immediate restoration of constitutional order and the restoring to their posts of the authorities democratically elected by the Honduran people. Secondly, we will persevere in the effort to achieve an American integration without exclusions or exceptions or embargoes, such the one imposed on Cuba, one without first, second or third class members. We are all Americans, and equals.

Without actions following, postulates are sterile. Uruguay is one of the main troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The difficulties that this peacekeeping system is going through are due, among other factors, to the growing demand for missions, their equally growing complexity and the effects of the global economic crisis on the funding for these operations. Far from discouraging us, they stimulate us to bolster and coordinate efforts with other Member States and the United Nations Secretariat to collaborate in stabilizing the areas affected by conflicts, in the protection of the civilian population, institutional strengthening and the promotion of bases for economic and social development of affected countries. Similarly, our staunch rejection of terrorism is not incompatible with cooperation among States in the fight against it while maintaining absolute respect for international law and human rights.

Uruguay is among the countries that are signatories to the widest range of human rights conventions, and on the occasion of the treaty-signing ceremony for the present period, Uruguay will sign the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, becoming one of the first signatories to that important international instrument. Uruguay is also party to the main international conventions in the sphere of the environment and sustainable development.

As is well known, Uruguay receives significant investments that contribute to its industrial development, but it also exercises rigorous control over their environmental quality, applying its internationally recognized regulations, demanding the use of the best

available technologies, and practising effective control in the field over environmental impacts. Uruguay is also responsible, transparent and reliable as regards investment for sustainable development.

In the era of globalization, it is not only the economy that has to be globalized. Peace, freedom, democracy, justice, dignity and the welfare of the people must be globalized as well. The countries represented here, each according to its respective identity, are working towards that end, as is Uruguay. Faced with the impossibility of discussing the vast system of policies and actions that are involved in that task, I will mention just two that Uruguayans wish to share with the international community, because they concern the needs, hopes, rights and responsibilities of all humankind.

Our country has taken a firm commitment as regards tobacco control policies, both at the international level through its ratification of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and at the national level through the implementation of policies for the improvement of the well-being of the population. In 2006, Uruguay became the first smoke-free country in the Americas and the seventh in the world.

This is no insignificant matter when one takes into account that, according to the World Health Organization, smoking is the leading avoidable cause of death worldwide. It is an epidemic that annually causes more than 5 million deaths throughout the world and more than 1 million in the Americas. Five million deaths a year are far more than those caused by alcoholism, traffic accidents, AIDS, illegal drugs, murder, suicide and the H1N1 virus combined. When we add up all the deaths caused by these pathologies, we find that the number of tobacco-related deaths is greater still. If the current trend continues, over the next 20 years tobacco-related deaths will double in the world and triple in our region, and in particular in the poorest countries.

Given that tobacco smoke does not affect smokers alone, in a study published in 1985 the English epidemiologist Richard Doll maintained that being in a room with a smoker for one hour a day is 100 times more likely to cause lung cancer in a non-smoker than spending 20 years in a building containing asbestos.

Our delegation at the United Nations sponsored and promoted resolution 63/8, whose implementation will allow us to have, at least in this environment, a smoke-free United Nations. It represents partial but auspicious progress in the fight against this epidemic.

In May 2007, a year after becoming a smoke-free country, Uruguay set out on the path to becoming a country with equal-opportunity access to information technologies. We are achieving this by means of the Ceibal project, also known as "one laptop per child", which consists, precisely, in providing each student and teacher of our public primary school system with a free computer and access to the Internet. By the end of this year, we will have provided a prototype to each of the 301,143 students and to 12,879 teachers in the country's 2,064 public elementary schools. This may seem like a small number, but it should be recalled that Uruguay has only some 3 million inhabitants.

The project is open to students with learning, motor or visual disabilities, who receive computers especially designed for their needs. Private schools are not excluded from the programme and can take part by purchasing the prototype for a modest sum. The Ceibal project is completely funded by the Uruguayan State, which allocates funds not only for acquiring and preparing the prototypes, but also for their maintenance and the continuity of the programme.

The Ceibal project is much more than simply the provision of computers and is therefore worth much more than its price. Its true worth lies in developing intelligence, introducing deep changes in teaching and learning, offering equal opportunities in access to information from childhood on — because equality is not a right for adults alone — and providing the information and knowledge indispensable to becoming a member of society and thus ensuring its proper functioning.

At the beginning of this address, I stated that if the United Nations raison d'être is to improve what we are as human beings, the Organization must be capable of improving itself as a system. But the United Nations is those who comprise it — we ourselves. Uruguay reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations reform process. The process that began at the 2005 Summit, which saw the creation of two new structures within the Organization — the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission — should be completed with consideration for those issues whose practical

implementation is pending or behind schedule with respect to the goals we have set.

Michel de Montaigne taught us that there is no greater destiny for human beings than seeing to the business of being human. Almost five centuries later, it is fitting to remember the teachings of that great Renaissance humanist. It should not, however, be remembered solely as something of the past; we should embrace it as a task of the present and put it into practice, or at least try. I believe that there is no other option if we really wish to survive as a species and to improve as human beings. I also believe that, if we all make a responsible attempt, we shall achieve it. In that conviction, intention and confidence, I greet the United Nations on behalf of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Tabaré Vázquez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Bouteflika (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me first to express the pleasure of the Algerian delegation in seeing an illustrious son of a neighbouring and brother country presiding over our work. I would like to assure you of Algeria's sincere and active support in the fulfilment of your mandate. I would also like to pay heartfelt homage to your predecessor, Father d'Escoto, for the skill he has demonstrated, his moral probity and his full commitment to multilateralism, based on the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

I would also like to express our gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his wise and enlightened conduct of the work of the Organization and the initiatives he consistently deploys to reinforce the role of the United Nations and affirm its moral authority.

This year, once again, the global economic crisis is at the heart of the general debate of the session. The world has had time to measure the scope and gravity of this crisis. It is not yet time to take stock, since we know now that this is neither a short-term economic crisis nor the bursting of a bubble such as the capitalist system has seen in the past. The world has realized that the crisis is that of a system governed by the rules of globalization, just as it has had to face the fact that any serious and lasting solution to this crisis will come about through courageous and concerted decisions. Such decisions must be aimed at promoting global economic governance based on standards of responsibility, equity, solidarity and progress: governance that will be aimed at putting an end to financial and commercial practices that are opaque, iniquitous and unfair, and imposed on the rest of the world in the name of free trade and its dubious efficiency.

The lack of coherence and harmony in the approach to the crisis is apparent from, inter alia, the unfair treatment meted out to developing countries. Why should the nations of the southern hemisphere be forced to bear the burden of a crisis they are not responsible for? Multilateral institutions, also undermined by contradictions and a lack of coherence, are unable to overcome impasses in negotiations on vital questions that have a direct impact on our populations.

This is the case, for instance, with the negotiations on a treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. Here is an area where displaying a spirit of compromise and solidarity is clearly in the interest of every country. And yet the positions of developed countries continue to be motivated by narrow national interests while the very survival of mankind is at stake.

It is also the case with the fundamental aims of non-proliferation and disarmament, which remain hostage to political double standards, discriminatory practices and non-compliance with commitments made, particularly on the part of certain nuclear Powers.

These practices have not spared the multilateral negotiation frameworks, which nonetheless enjoy legitimacy and the expertise necessary to realize progress on the path to reinforcing the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. It is also the case in the fight against impunity and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, which raises the issue of exploitation of these noble causes for political ends.

The question of human rights is addressed with a selective approach, which casts suspicion even on initiatives based on a sincere desire to ensure respect for human dignity. This, too, is the case with international cooperation in the struggle against terrorism. The Algerian delegation believes that the importance of the juridical weapon would be enhanced by the adoption of the long-awaited global convention. It is also convinced that constant adaptation of approach is necessary in responding to this major threat.

The African Union has undertaken not to pay ransom to those who take hostages, and we support its appeal to the United Nations to make this a universal policy as rapidly as possible, given the threat that this phenomenon poses to the security of our peoples and the stability of our countries.

We hope that this Organization will be able to realize substantial achievements in the area of reform, whether in revitalizing the General Assembly, reshaping the Security Council or strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council. Obviously, a revitalized General Assembly, with a strengthened mandate, will be better able to reach consensus on the reform of the Security Council — a Security Council that would reflect the legitimate aspirations of developing countries, and those of Africa in particular, with equitable representation, along with the quest for new working methods more in line with the demands of our times.

Algeria's commitment to a policy of good neighbourliness is demonstrated in particular through the numerous initiatives and sincere efforts we have deployed in partnership with our neighbours. We are firmly convinced that preservation of peace, promotion of development and respect for people's rights are a prerequisite for building a peaceful, united and prosperous Arab Maghreb that is stable and fully integrated.

Everyone knows the importance we attach to the right of peoples to self-determination and the effort that we have put into arriving at a just and lasting solution to the conflict in Western Sahara. The United Nations can always count on Algeria's complete and sincere support in every initiative aimed at settling this dispute in accordance with the responsibilities that the Organization has taken upon itself and in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

We are fully committed to the cause of the Palestinian people, and believe that current developments pose a grave threat to peace and security throughout the Middle East. The region will never regain peace and stability without a just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian problem, which lies at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is now obvious to all that a satisfactory solution is impossible unless credible and substantial pressure is applied to the Israeli occupying forces with a view to compelling them to put an end to their policies of provocation and aggression against the Palestinian people, to keep their promises and to respond favourably to all Arab peace initiatives.

Algeria participates actively in the efforts of the African countries to put an end to any conflict that hampers their development and to achieve the political and economic integration of the entire continent.

Establishment of the African Union has created a respected and credible partner whose collaboration with the United Nations has made possible visible progress, especially through the significant reduction of hotspots of tension on our continent.

I will end by reiterating our wish that the conduct of our international affairs will be enhanced by the effective and sincere commitment of the international community to the task of renewing and reinforcing the multilateral system

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Lee (*spoke in Korean; English text provided by the delegation*): First of all, let me extend my sincere congratulations to the President, Mr. Ali Treki, on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. I am confident that under his able leadership, meaningful progress will be made during this session. I also wish to express my appreciation and support to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts in reforming the United Nations.

I would first like to recall the special historic ties between the Republic of Korea and the United Nations. The contemporary history of the Republic of Korea began with the United Nations. Under the auspices of the United Nations, we held our first democratic elections in 1948, and with the approval of the United Nations we became the only legitimate Government on the Korean Peninsula.

Indeed, the Republic of Korea is a country that has been championed by the United Nations. Men from 16 United Nations Member States came to our support when the Korean War broke out in 1950, only two years after the founding of the Republic. Fallen heroes of the Korean War from 11 countries are buried in the only United Nations cemetery in the world, located in Busan, the second largest city in Korea. To this day, the cemetery serves as a place for the Korean people to commemorate their noble sacrifices.

At the time of the Korean War, Korea was among the least developed countries in the world, with a per capita income of less than $50. But to everyone's surprise, Korea was able to achieve both industrialization and democratization in a single generation. Korea has transformed itself from an aid-recipient country to a donor country.

While this achievement is the fruit of the Korean people's toils and tears, the invaluable support of the United Nations has been a great source of strength. For this reason, Korea observed United Nations Day even before becoming a Member State in 1991. Building on such achievements, Korea is now embarking on a path of actively contributing to the international community. That is the goal that a global Korea aims to achieve.

We wish to share our past development experiences in order to help developing countries lift themselves out of famine and poverty. While financial support to developing countries is important, it is even more important to find the right development model to fit each country.

Today, the unprecedented financial crisis is compounding the difficulties of developing countries. As a member of the G-20 Troika , Korea is making the utmost effort to strengthen the free trade system which powers global economic growth, while also ensuring that the voices of developing countries are heard.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set forth by the United Nations must be realized. Development cooperation and humanitarian assistance need to increase, especially for the developing countries most severely affected by the economic crisis. Korea will fulfil its pledge to triple the volume of its 2008 official development assistance (ODA) by 2015. And in 2011, we will be hosting the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul. By ensuring its success, we will enhance aid effectiveness for the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 and contribute to strengthening the global partnership for a more comprehensive and effective development cooperation.

Today, young Korean volunteers, under the name of World Friends Korea, are doing volunteer work throughout the world to put into practice the spirit of love and giving. Currently, more than 3,000 volunteers have been dispatched to some 40 countries, and we will continue to send more volunteers, focusing on sharing our areas of strength in information technology, medicine and agricultural technologies as well as our experience in governance development.

Among other efforts, Korea is also actively engaging in promoting international peace and security

and preventing terrorism through its participation in peacekeeping operations. Currently, Koreans are serving in 13 missions around the world. Since last March, we have also been taking part in multinational efforts to protect commercial vessels of all flags from acts of piracy in the waters off the coast of Somalia.

Korea will faithfully fulfil its responsibilities as expected by the international community, including in the areas of preventing conflicts, countering terrorism and responding to natural disasters.

Responding to climate change has become an indispensable and urgent item on the agenda for all of humanity. Climate change poses a common challenge to all humankind and thus requires the concerted efforts of developed and developing countries as well as newly industrialized countries. For this reason, all countries need to take part and be prepared in addressing this challenge.

Korea greatly appreciates the role of the United Nations in placing climate change high on the agenda as an urgent priority and in galvanizing global efforts to address this critical issue. At the Copenhagen Conference, to be held in December 2009, the international community is expected to deliver a very important decision with great implications for the future. At this very place yesterday, we reaffirmed our commitment to making the Copenhagen Conference a success.

Korea, while not included in annex I of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), plans to make a voluntary announcement before the end of this year stating its midterm emissions-reduction target for 2020. Korea has proposed the establishment of a registry of nationally appropriate mitigation actions at the secretariat of the UNFCCC, with a view to inviting developing countries to voluntarily participate in mitigation actions and to providing the international support that they need. We hope that our proposals and efforts will contribute positively to the attainment of successful outcomes at Copenhagen.

To respond proactively to climate change, Korea has adopted low carbon green growth as a guiding vision for our nation and a strategy for further development. We are currently working to enact a framework law on green growth and establish a five-year plan for green growth. Thereby, we will not only transform our economic and industrial structures, but also change our very lifestyles to become more future-oriented. Under this plan, Korea will invest about 2 per cent of its gross domestic product in the field of green growth every year over the next five years. This is twice the level recommended by the United Nations.

The underlying objective of the low carbon green growth strategy is to promote sustainable development by putting in place a positive cycle in which the environment revives the economy and the economy preserves the environment. This strategy is the most effective way to address global climate change and to overcome the economic crisis at the same time. By pursuing a green growth policy that makes assertive fiscal investments in areas of green growth, Korea is preparing for the future, while also responding to the immediate economic crisis.

The development of green technologies and international cooperation are key factors in ensuring success in responding to climate change. At the expanded Group of Eight Summit last August, Korea was designated as a leader in transformational technology, including the area of smart grid technology. Korea will strengthen global partnership for cooperation on green technology and share the ensuing benefits of this partnership with the rest of the world.

While fossil energy is replaceable, water is not. Water is the most important resource in our lives. Accordingly, I wish to urge the President of the General Assembly, world leaders and the Secretary-General to take a special interest in the issues concerning water, since it is also a crucial factor in achieving the MDGs.

Today, close to half of the world's population face water-related problems, and most of the climate change-related natural disasters, including floods, drought and rising sea levels, are water-related disasters. In the course of launching the East Asia Climate Partnership, the Korean Government reviewed water-related issues in Asia. We have come to the conclusion that the provision of clean water and the development of policies and infrastructure for inundation and disaster prevention are the most pressing issues at hand.

Korea possesses cutting-edge desalination technology and has been improving its integrated water resource management system. The restoration of Cheong Gae Cheon in Seoul, which had been a

concrete-covered dry stream for several decades, has provided more than 10 million residents with a pleasant recreation site and a clean stream. This was an environmentally friendly greening project that helped the city to overcome the heat island phenomenon, not to mention rendering it more attractive at the same time.

Such experiences and achievements have led us to launch a four major rivers restoration project, involving the four rivers that traverse our country from north to south and from east to west. This project not only provides a fundamental solution for securing water and controlling flooding, but also enables us to revive the ecosystem of these rivers.

The time has come for the international community to establish a system of governance that addresses water-related issues effectively. I am aware that some 20 United Nations agencies have been working in earnest on water issues. Issues concerning water are complex, as they have a bearing on a wide range of areas. To establish a more effective system of international cooperation on water, I would like to propose a specialized integrated water management cooperation initiative.

Global peace and security form the cornerstone for maintaining the stability and prosperity of all mankind. Today, global peace is threatened by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. To respond to these challenges, strong determination and cooperation among all countries are essential in strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Last October, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put forward a five-point proposal for nuclear disarmament. And, in his speech in Prague in April, United States President Barack Obama set out his vision for a world free of nuclear weapons. Through sufficient discussions, we anticipate that these initiatives, which embody the hopes and desires of humanity, will enhance a common understanding on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In particular, a nuclear weapons-free Korean Peninsula must be realized in order to attain peace in North-East Asia and beyond. Denuclearization is a prerequisite to laying a path towards genuine reconciliation and unification in the Korean peninsula, which is the only remaining divided region in the world.

The Republic of Korea will play an active part in the concerted international efforts to dismantle the nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to join in these efforts and to return to the Six-Party Talks forthwith and without precondition.

The 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, to which both Koreas committed themselves, must be observed. On that basis, the Republic of Korea will increase dialogue and exchanges with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and strengthen cooperation with the international community towards that country's development. I have proposed a grand bargain that would involve dismantling the core components of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme and the concomitant provision of security assurances and intensified economic support within the framework of the Six-Party Talks. We are currently engaged in consultations with the concerned parties. I want to make it clear that now is the time for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to make the decision to achieve genuine peace on the Korean peninsula, and for its own sake as well.

We are confronted with diverse and complex challenges that can be met only through international cooperation. In meeting the expectations of the international community, we hope that a renewed and strengthened United Nations will assume a greater role. To that end, it is important now more than ever for the United Nations to demonstrate efficient and effective management. We hope that the United Nations reform initiatives in the various areas will yield concrete results.

As a responsible State Member of the United Nations, Korea will continue to render its close cooperation so that the Organization can play a lead role in bringing progress to all humankind and the international community at large. Korea seeks to be a friend to the world that is considerate of others and contributes to global society.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Korea for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the French Republic.

Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Sarkozy (*spoke in French*): In speaking to the General Assembly in France's name today, I am well aware that we all have a historic responsibility in the current circumstances.

In the midst of a financial, economic and social crisis that has no precedent in the history of the United Nations, and faced with the threat a global ecological disaster, we must now invent a new world where the follies of yesterday are no longer possible. That is our responsibility. Now we all know towards what catastrophes our obstinate attempts to solve the problems of the twenty-first century with twentieth-century ideas and instruments may lead us. No one among us can claim any longer that he did not know.

The President returned to the Chair.

There is a universal awareness that the path that the world has taken over the past few decades is a dead end. This awareness is born of sorrow, suffering and fear. We are politically and morally accountable for the suffering on our planet. Tens of millions of men and women have lost their jobs and their homes. A billion human beings are suffering from hunger, and hundreds of millions have no access to water, energy or minimal health care.

To those hundreds of millions of people, we, the heads of State and Government, and no one else, must restore hope. Those who are paying the price of the crisis had no role in bringing it about. We owe an answer to the people who are outraged by the behaviour of those in the financial world who led us to the brink of chaos and continue to seek to enrich themselves indecently. We owe an answer to those who are still dying in absurd wars from another age, while humankind has so many challenges to face.

France's answer is unambiguous. Things cannot go on as they were. We must change. We cannot allow it to start all over again, leading to another disaster tomorrow. After such a strong disavowal of our usual thinking and our deep-rooted prejudices, the task before us is precisely the same as that faced by men of good will who sought here to build a new political, economic and monetary world order after the Second World War. The generation that preceded us was equal to its responsibilities. The question today is: Will we be equal to that same responsibility?

The world will change. It cannot be otherwise. The only question is: Will the world change because we are able to act with wisdom, intelligence and courage, or because fresh crises will arise if we are not wise enough to take the path of radical change?

The truth is that we have already waited too long to regulate globalization, fight global warming and curb nuclear proliferation. And I should like solemnly to tell the leaders of Iranian that they would be making a tragic mistake in relying on the passive response of the international community in order to pursue their military nuclear programme.

We have waited too long to re-establish peace in the Middle East by giving the Palestinian people the State to which they are entitled in the name of law and in the name of justice. And we have waited too long to guarantee the people of Israel the right to live in security, which the tragedies of history have made so necessary for them.

We know what we need to do now: increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. I say in the name of France, it is unacceptable that the African continent does not have a single permanent member on the Security Council — it is unacceptable because it is unjust. It is unacceptable that the South American continent, with such a great power as Brazil, or India with its population of one billion, or Japan or Germany, should be excluded from among the permanent members of the Council. It is unacceptable, and I say here that the legitimacy of the United Nations is riding on this reform. Either the United Nations reforms and its legitimacy will grow, or

the reform fails and then decisions will be taken outside the United Nations.

We must reform the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; that is indispensable. Voting rights need to be more equitably distributed. The missions of both the Fund and the Bank need to be redefined. To maintain the Fund as the guardian of an orthodoxy that has been so severely shaken by the crisis would be a tragic mistake.

The international system has to be reformed. We cannot have a politically multipolar world with a single currency. That is not acceptable; it is not possible. We have to re-engineer the financial capitalism system. If we have a system in which the real price of risk or the real price of rare resources is not being paid, that is a suicidal system.

We need to eliminate tax havens, for we must not tolerate places where money derived from speculation, crime and fraud is stashed. It is up to us. No one in the world would understand if we were to fail to live up to this objective.

We need to curb the price swings of commodities that are subject to excessive speculation, starting with oil, since this instability is unsustainable. The countries that have commodities must be paid a fair price for their resources. We must not accept the speculation that destabilizes the world over the costs of commodities.

In Copenhagen, we need to commit to quantitative targets for greenhouse gas emissions. We can no longer put off the moment of choice. We need to set up a world environment organization. We need to acknowledge the legitimacy of the principle of a carbon tax border adjustment mechanism so that nobody can profit from environmental dumping.

We cannot let the law of trade be the only law. I believe in free trade, but there are fundamental standards. We are members of the World Health Organization. How can we impair the right to health of those who have nothing? We are members of the International Labour Organization, which has defined the fundamental standards in this field. How can we accept that those standards be flouted? The right to health, the right to a minimum respect for one's social rights and the right to protection of the planet are just as important as the right to trade. There is no single right that is more important than the others.

We cannot ask developing countries and poor countries to comply with these standards if we, the rich, do not help them in their efforts. We all belong to the same human race. We all live on the same planet. We are all facing the same challenges.

So yes, we need to be able to share our technology. France is ready to do so, and so are the other wealthy countries of the world. Yes, we will need to come up with further resources for development assistance and for meeting the ecological challenge together. I do not hesitate to say that we will find these resources by taxing excessive gains from speculation and profits. We do not have to look far for resources; they are right there. I would like to appeal to all States, to all international organizations, that the recommendations made by the commission chaired by Joseph Stiglitz be disseminated broadly. Let us make no mistake about the way we measure economic growth.

The task is a huge one, and it is only just beginning. That is all the more reason for starting now and starting quickly. We have little time remaining. Each of us needs to realize what would happen if we had to go home and explain to our fellow citizens that we have been incapable of reaching an agreement, of finding new solutions at a time when they are suffering so grievously from the consequences of the crisis. I wish to say very clearly that nothing would be worse that a mediocre compromise in Pittsburgh and in Copenhagen. World opinion and the current circumstances demand that we find a real solution to the problems and not just to pretend.

If we do nothing, the threat of the worst crisis is not behind us but ahead of us. We are at one of those moments in history when political decisions will have a profound and lasting impact on the future. We have no choice; we must take risks, since the greatest risk today would be to do nothing, to let ourselves be carried along by the force of habit, to think that we still have time. France has come to tell you that we have no more time.

I hope that this year, 2009, is when a new world order — a more fair, more efficient world order — will be established, one that each of us will be comfortable with.

The President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the French Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of Sweden

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Sweden.

Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of Sweden, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of Sweden and President of the European Union, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Reinfeldt (Sweden): In the beginning, there were 51 nations committed to international peace and security, sharing the common goal of developing friendly relations among nations, and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights. Today, the 51 nations of the first session of the General Assembly have become 192. Today, the General Assembly really is the town hall meeting of the world.

On behalf of the 27 States members of the European Union (EU), I bring a message of cooperation and partnership — a message that our Union is open to the outside world.

Globalization is good. Through globalization, hundreds of millions of people have been lifted out of poverty; information, ideas and inventions shared; goods and services provided. It all moves quickly from one country to another. We prosper from this. It enlightens us. It helps us to understand the ways of other parts of the world.

At the same time, globalization means that one nation's problems will also come knocking at the doors of other nations. Pandemics, food crises, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and humans, terrorism and violent ideologies are no longer limited by borders and no longer only one nation's problem. And so, we have to manage the risks and threats that follow.

In this work, we need the United Nations broad-based legitimacy for international actions and norms to coordinate our efforts. And the United Nations, for its part, has to adapt in order to stay relevant and to be able to address the issues before us. The European Union wishes to contribute to these efforts.

We welcome the declared wish of the United States to work together with others in multilateral institutions. This opens the door to a promising new era in international cooperation.

We are facing one of the biggest challenges of our generation. Our world has a fever, and the fever is rising. In the most vulnerable of the world's nations, the consequences of climate change will be alarming. Starvation, severe flooding and climate migration will be a reality even if we keep to the two-degree target set by the United Nations.

No doubt, developed countries will have to lead the fight against climate change. By 2020, we will have to reduce emissions by 25 to 40 per cent from 1990 levels. But if emissions are to peak by no later than 2020, to be reduced by at least 50 per cent by 2050 and to continue to decline thereafter, our efforts alone will not be enough. The developing countries need our help. They need our help to pay the bill that we, through our emissions, have contributed to.

That is why the European Union last week agreed to start discussions on how much climate financing is needed in developing countries. That is why we are taking concrete steps. That is why we are putting one more brick into the negotiations, and urge other developed countries to do the same.

At the meeting of the leaders of the G-8 and the Major Economies Forum in Italy this summer, there was agreement on the two-degree target. Now, we need to see increased commitment and concrete mid-term targets from developed as well as developing countries. If we want our children and their children to experience nature as we know it, we must act now. And every nation or group of nations has to do its part.

The EU is willing to do its part. We will reduce our emissions. We will promote low carbon growth, contribute our fair share of financing and support adaptation worldwide. And we will remain committed to playing a lead role in bringing about a global and comprehensive climate agreement in Copenhagen in December.

What started out as the pursuit of easy money, unhealthy risk-taking and, in some cases, pure greed

escalated this past year into a financial roller coaster. The effects on both human security and development have been severe. The European Union will continue to promote global financial stability and sustainable world recovery, firmly committed to taking comprehensive, targeted and coordinated action to support developing countries, especially the poorest and the most vulnerable; determined to reach a comprehensive agreement at the Doha Round, making sure it contains elements of real value for developing countries, particularly the poorest; and continuing its efforts to lift more people out of poverty in reaching the Millennium Development Goals and to achieve our respective official development assistance targets.

Human rights are universal. Human rights are indivisible. The European Union is a voice for human rights. We believe in democracy. We believe in the rule of law. The European Union will continue to call for the worldwide abolition of the death penalty in all cases and under all circumstances. We will continue to stand up for the empowerment of women and gender equality. Without that, it will be impossible to draw on all those talents that are needed for a nation to move from poverty to development and prosperity.

To uphold those fundamental values, we need security. We cannot let war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity go unpunished. Therefore, the work of the International Criminal Court is fully supported by the European Union. We cannot allow anyone, by threat or use of force, to act against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. The rules of international law apply equally to all States, large and small.

The European Union stands ready to continue working with the United Nations in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We also conduct our own peacekeeping efforts, often in close cooperation with the United Nations. The transfers of responsibilities in Chad and in Kosovo are examples of that.

Twenty years after the end of the cold war, peace and security are still threatened by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by the fact that those weapons risk falling into the wrong hands. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to renounce nuclear weapons, and we stand ready to engage in that matter. We also welcome the global nuclear security summit that will take place next year.

Europe and Africa are close in geography, but also through globalization and strong partnership. The European Union provides support to Africa when needed. Our naval operation Atalanta, off the coast of Somalia, protects vessels delivering humanitarian aid and provides support to the African Union Mission in Somalia. We have for many years cooperated with the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We speak out on injustice on the African continent. The use of sexual violence as a weapon of intimidation and terror is appalling. The attacks on women and girls in eastern Congo and other places are unacceptable. To protect we must empower; and so, to empower women in conflict situations, Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) have to be implemented.

We wish to see a free, democratic and prosperous Africa. That is especially true in the case of Zimbabwe. The Global Political Agreement and the formation of the Government of National Unity were important steps forward. However, implementing the Agreement requires commitment. It requires a spirit of cooperation. In that regard, much remains to be done.

Europe is a union of many cultures. Our openness to the world around us is evident in the fact that Christians, Jews and Muslims, those who believe in God and those who do not, can live side by side in mutual respect. The European Union wishes to enhance its interaction with the Muslim world through the Alliance of Civilizations and through cooperation in education and development by providing opportunities for the young. In that way, we can create an environment that will allow us to focus on what we have in common rather than on our perceived differences.

Afghan children show the same curiosity as children all over the world, including my own, longing for knowledge, wanting to take part and full of excitement over what life has to offer. In order to invest in the future of Afghanistan and in human development, we cannot let their light be shut out. As a friend of the people of Afghanistan, the European Union is committed to assisting them in stabilizing, democratizing and developing their country. Education, also for young girls and women, is indispensable. In the years ahead, we need to do more to ensure that this is the way forward for Afghanistan.

As a partner of Pakistan, we know that what happens in Pakistan influences not only the Pakistanis, but the development of the region as a whole. Therefore, it is crucial to continue to assist Pakistan in its efforts to develop the rule of law and to build a more stable and more democratic society.

As a friend of the people of Israel, we tell the Israeli Government to reach out for peace, to end occupation, to respect international law, to work for a two-State solution, to immediately end all settlement activities on occupied land, including East Jerusalem, and to end the isolation of Gaza.

As a friend of the Palestinians, we expect them to stop all violent acts against Israel, to continue to build viable State institutions and to develop democracy and the rule of law. We will continue both to provide financial support to the Palestinian Authority and to assist in capacity-building on the ground. In that regard, the European Union fully supports the United States efforts to resume peace negotiations and to stand ready to actively contribute to their success. The future of both Israel and Palestine lies in that cooperation.

As a friend of the people of Iran, we are concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation and the violent crackdown on popular protests. The Iranian nuclear issue represents a major challenge to international peace and security, to regional stability and to the non-proliferation regime. Iran must regain the trust of the international community, comply with relevant Security Council resolutions and contribute to peace in the Middle East.

As a friend of the people of Burma/Myanmar, we will tell the military leaders that only democracy and human rights can bring peace and stability to the people that they say they represent.

The Swedish statesman and former United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once said that the pursuit of peace and progress, with its trials and its errors, its successes and its setbacks, can never be relaxed and never abandoned. That was true then and it is true today. The people of the world need to know that uniting nations is a work not of the past, but of the future, carried forward by shared values and by mutual respect and ever more relevant with increased globalization.

In that common endeavour, the European Union will remain a reliable partner on security, development and human rights, always contributing actively to improving and strengthening the United Nations, always continuing to refine the instruments needed to deal with opportunities and threats alike, and always willing to do its part in helping to create a better world to live in for future generations, everywhere.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Silvio Berlusconi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy.

Mr. Silvio Berlusconi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Silvio Berlusconi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Berlusconi (Italy) (*spoke in Italian; English text provided by the delegation*): This morning, like all other members of the Assembly, I listened with great interest to President Obama's statement. The President spoke from the heart with great idealism and called upon all of us to shoulder our common responsibility to secure the future of the world by bringing about real change. He expressed feelings, hopes and goals that I share and that I also intended to express here. However, since he said those things so well, I shall forgo that part of my statement and confine myself to reporting on the outcomes of the L'Aquila summit of the Group of Eight (G-8), over which I had the honour to preside.

The L'Aquila summit brought together in that grief-stricken city the representatives of 28 countries representing more than 80 per cent of the global economy. Our first order of business was to continue the work being done on banking and financial market regulations, which will again occupy us in two days'

time at the Pittsburgh summit. We believed it crucial to ensure solid and lasting growth. Economic activity must once again be based on the principles of equity and transparency. The new development model should also be based on open markets and a rejection of protectionism so that the poorest countries can benefit fully from the growth opportunities provided by international trade.

After L'Aquila, we decided to revive the Doha negotiations with a view to concluding them by 2010. Our trade ministers have already met in India to provide practical follow-up to that decision. Pittsburgh will be an important opportunity to reaffirm the political commitments undertaken at L'Aquila.

Progress was also made in the area of climate change. The major economies reached an agreement to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The common front to combat climate change was reaffirmed by the broad participation in the meeting held here yesterday at the initiative of the Secretary-General. I thank him for the leadership that he demonstrated on that occasion — a quality so essential to the success of the Copenhagen summit.

L'Aquila reaffirmed a clear and fundamental concept that I wish to reiterate today. Overcoming the challenge of climate change will require commitment on the part of all actors in the global economy, without exception.

In the area of food security, we decided to establish a $20-billion fund for agricultural development and the fight against world hunger. The effort to restore agriculture's place at the heart of the international agenda is a common thread running through the G-8 summit, the Pittsburgh summit of the Group of 20 (G-20) and the food security summit that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations will host in Rome in November.

Too often in the past, the financial assistance allocated to developing countries has failed to reach those for whom it was intended. That is why we have decided that such financing should be invested in the implementation of concrete projects primarily targeting agricultural infrastructure. The beneficiary countries must also do their part. If it is to be effective, assistance should be directed only to those countries that promote democracy, are committed to good governance, respect human rights and protect women and children.

Finally, we discussed the need to firmly counter stock-market speculation and the manipulation of the energy, commodities and food resource markets. This is of the utmost importance. Speculation in food products — wheat, rice and soy — has led to serious crises, in particular on the African continent, where the elderly and children have been dying of starvation. In turn, dramatic fluctuations in oil prices have contributed to financial and economic instability. Why? Because the price of crude oil has risen from $70 to $150 a barrel, only to drop to $32 dollars and then bounce back to $70, despite a nearly 2 per cent decrease in world consumption over the past year. We know only too well that such fluctuations are caused by speculation, whereby a barrel of oil is bought and sold four to six times before it reaches the end user. And it is precisely the interest of speculators that drives up the price of a barrel.

Thus, it is an absolute priority that the futures market be more strictly regulated. In our view, we should also consider a global system of strategic commodity reserves in order to nip in the bud any speculative tendencies. Impartial specialized agencies, such as those of the United Nations, should also be empowered. Finally, the fight against speculation must also ultimately include the abolition of tax havens. Much has been done to eliminate existing havens, but we must also strengthen the monitoring role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in order to fight attempts to create new ones.

In a nutshell, those are the main outcomes of the L'Aquila summit. The crisis from which we are emerging makes it incumbent upon all of us to address the issue of effective governance. The G-8 still has a major role to play in geopolitical, non-proliferation and development issues, as confirmed at L'Aquila. Together with the G-20, which is now developing alongside it, we need to coordinate our actions to tackle global economic governance and open it up to all major countries wishing to contribute. In doing so, we must, of course, respect the central role of the United Nations, beginning with its most representative organ, the General Assembly.

As for the United Nations, we must also reform the Security Council to make it more effective and representative. Let me strike a note of caution, however. Adding new national permanent members would simply increase the sense of exclusion of all countries that contribute actively to international peace

and security and of those that could assume growing responsibilities in the future.

Finally, during the past century, the international community faced even more tragic crises than it does today. History shows that no crisis is insurmountable, but we must be positive, resolute and, above all, united. As President Obama recalled this morning, we are all going to have to roll up our sleeves. That is the key message sent from L'Aquila. Only through common commitment will we be able to restore the consumer confidence that is so indispensable to a renewal of spending and investment. Only through common action will we be able to overcome a crisis whose roots lie also in the psychological soil of fear as the determining factor.

If we are willing and able to do this together, our efforts will be successful and we will manage to limit the depth and the duration of the crisis. I have no doubt that we will succeed. I am absolutely sure of that.

I thank representatives for their attention, and offer my best wishes for their work.

The President (*spoke in English*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Silvio Berlusconi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Brown (United Kingdom): I stand here to reaffirm the Charter of the United Nations, not to tear it up. I call on every nation to support its universal principles.

A year ago, we met on the brink of a global crisis and, as national leaders spoke in turn at this rostrum, the full scale of the danger was becoming clear — a threat not just to jobs, businesses and life savings but, with the imminent risk of failure of the world's banking system, the prospect of entire countries failing as nations across Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America struggled to access credit.

That crisis demanded global action. As never before, the fate of every country rested on the actions of all. And as the fear of the unthinkable took hold, we reached a clear choice: to fail separately or to succeed together.

At the G-20 meetings in Washington and again in London, we made our choice. Governments came together to begin the fight back against the global recession. We acted in concert, recognizing that national interests could be protected only by serving the common interest, and that in this new global economy, the economy is indivisible and recession anywhere can threaten prosperity everywhere. We reckoned also that, if growth is to be sustained, it has to be shared. Global problems can be mastered only through global solutions.

So I think that today we can draw strength from the unprecedented unity that has defined the past year. But we cannot be complacent. For while it may seem strange to say so after a time of such intense global cooperation, our world is now entering a six-month period which may prove even more testing for international cooperation together.

I believe that we face five urgent challenges that demand momentous decisions — decisions that I would argue are epoch-making — on climate change, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, shared prosperity and eradicating poverty.

Once again, we are at a point of no return. And just as the collapse of the banks focused our minds a year ago, so we must grasp this next set of challenges immediately.

If we do not reach a climate change deal at Copenhagen, if we miss this great opportunity to agree together to protect our planet, we cannot hope for an easy second chance some time in the future. There will be no retrospective global agreement to undo the

damage that we have caused. This is the moment now to limit and reverse the climate change we are inflicting on future generations — not later, not at another conference, not in a later decade, after we have already lost 10 years to inaction and delay.

And if, in Afghanistan, we give way to the insurgency and Al-Qaida , other terrorist groups and Al-Qaida will return and, from that sanctuary once again plot, train for and launch attacks on the rest of the world.

There can be no chance, either, of a nuclear-free world if we allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons and, in doing so, set off a new arms race.

There can be no global compact for jobs and growth if we choke off recovery by failing to act together to follow through on the coordinated global fiscal expansion we agreed and have now put in place.

And if we do not act together to prevent avoidable illness, there can be no plan to save tomorrow the 12,000 children who are dying in Africa today and every day.

So I say we do need world agreement on urgent challenges.

Now let me elaborate first on climate change. Despite the promises we have made, the road to a successful outcome in Copenhagen is not assured. Why is that? It is so because, above all, a robust and long-term deal on climate change requires money. If the poorest and most vulnerable are going to be able to adapt; if the emerging economies are going to embark on low-carbon development paths; and if the forest nations are going to slow and stop deforestation, then I know that the richer countries must contribute financially.

That is why I have proposed a new approach to financing our action against climate change. It will provide substantially increased additional and predictable flows. They will be flows of capital from both public and private sectors. They would be worth around $100 billion a year by 2020. In the coming days, we must make progress.

A post-2012 agreement on climate change at Copenhagen is the next great test of our global cooperation. Each of us has a duty of leadership to make sure that it happens. We must build on the discussions at Secretary-General Ban's meeting this week. I have said that I will go to Copenhagen to conclude the deal because I believe that it is too important an agreement — for the global economy, and for the future of every nation represented here — simply to leave it to chance. So I urge my fellow leaders to commit themselves to backing up our official negotiators by going to Copenhagen too.

I believe that a safer Afghanistan means a safer world. But none of us can be safe if we walk away from that country or from our common mission and resolve. NATO and its partners, from Australia to Japan to other countries, must agree new ways to implement our strategy. I believe that we must ensure that "Afghanization" takes place — that the army, people and the people of Afghanistan assume greater responsibility for the security of their own country.

So, too, must we unite against terror and injustice wherever they are to be found in our world. I believe that it shames us all that the people of Somalia and the Sudan are still subject to the most terrible of violence; that Israel and Palestine have still not found a way to live side by side in security and peace; and that, for the people of Burma, their elected leader is subjected to a show trial and decades of imprisonment. There is more that we can do and more that we must do. And we must carry forward our efforts to make a coherent, strategic and more effective approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding around the world.

Once there were five nuclear-armed Powers. Now there are nine. The real and present danger is that more will soon follow. And the risk is not just State aggression, but the acquisition of nuclear weapons by terrorists. So we must accept that we are at a moment of danger when decades of preventing proliferation could be overturned by a damaging rise in proliferation. If we are serious about the ambition of a nuclear-free world, we will need statesmanship, not brinksmanship.

Tomorrow's Security Council resolution will be vital, in my view, as we move forward towards next year's global nuclear security summit in April and the Review Conference in May. Our proposal is a grand global bargain between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. There are three elements to it, where careful and sober international leadership is essential and in which Britain will play its part: the responsibilities of non-nuclear States, the rights of

non-nuclear States and, of course, the responsibilities of nuclear weapon States.

First, let there be no ambiguity: Iran and North Korea must now know that the world will be even tougher on proliferation. We are ready to consider further sanctions. Britain will insist in future that the onus on non-nuclear States is that in the years ahead it is for them to prove that they are not developing nuclear weapons.

Secondly, Britain will offer civil nuclear power to non-nuclear States who are ready to renounce any plans for nuclear weapons, helping non-nuclear States acquire what President Eisenhower so memorably called "atoms for peace". With others, we will be prepared to sponsor a uranium bank outside those countries to help them access civil nuclear power. And Britain is ready to launch a new nuclear centre of excellence to help develop an economic low-carbon proliferation-resistant nuclear fuel cycle.

My third point is that all nuclear-weapon States must reciprocally play their part in reducing nuclear weapons as part of an agreement by non-nuclear States to renounce them. This is exactly what the Non-Proliferation Treaty intended, and in line with maintaining our nuclear deterrent I have asked our National Security Committee to report to me on the potential future reduction of our nuclear weapon submarines from four to three.

While economic cooperation has stabilized the international banking system and forged the foundation for the resumption of economic growth, recovery is neither entrenched nor irreversible. The great lesson of the past year is that only the bold and global action that we took prevented a recession becoming a depression. We have delivered a coordinated monetary and fiscal response that the International Labour Organization estimates has saved 7 million to 11 million jobs across the world.

So at Pittsburgh, when the Group of 20 (G-20) meets tomorrow, we must cement a global compact for jobs and growth — a compact to bring unemployment down and bring rising prosperity across the globe. We must maximize the impact of the stimulus measures we have agreed. There must be proper planning of exit strategies together to make sure the recovery does not falter. We do not and must not turn off the life support for our economy prematurely. We must also facilitate agreement setting clear objectives on how each of us can contribute to worldwide growth in the future, and we must ensure that such future growth is balanced and sustainable.

I believe we need stronger economic cooperation now as we navigate the uncertainties of recovery. I therefore propose we launch the compact by agreeing that we are committed to high levels of growth on a sustainable and balanced basis. This must be backed up by comprehensive reform of the financial sector. It must include international principles on bonuses. We must strengthen our targeting of tax havens. From next month, real sanctions must be meted out against those jurisdictions that fail to meet global standards.

The voice of Africa will have to be heard and heeded to bring recovery in areas devastated by the events of the past year and to assure that for all developing countries, inside and outside Africa, we do not put the Millennium Development Goals beyond reach as a result of a wider failure of global responsibility.

In London, the G-20 agreed on measures worth $50 billion for poor countries to help them weather the crisis. Because of London, the International Monetary Fund can lend $8 billion instead of $2 billion over this year and next. This is already helping Kenya and Tanzania to increase Government spending in response to the crisis.

Amid all these challenges, we must remember a fundamental promise we made 10 years ago. And this is my fifth and final imperative: to achieve a vision for 2015 that we are in danger of betraying, because on present trends it will not take five years — as we pledged — and not even 50 years; it will take more than 100 years to deliver on some of our Millennium Development Goals. And 100 years is too long for the peoples of our countries to wait for the justice that has been promised.

As President Obama has said, we need a global plan to make the Millennium Development Goals a reality. The unyielding, grinding, soul-destroying, so often lethal poverty I saw in Africa and other developing countries has convinced me that unless empowerment through trade justice is matched by empowerment through free education and free health care, then this generation in sub-Saharan Africa will not have the opportunity they deserve to rise out of poverty and will never be fully free.

I believe the greatest of injustice demands the boldest of actions. Today at this United Nations General Assembly, we will see history being made with the beginnings of universal free health care in Africa and Asia as Burundi, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Nepal, Liberia and Ghana all make major announcements, which I applaud, that extend free health care and abolish user fees. As a result of those actions, more than 10 million additional people in Africa and Asia will now have access to free health services — 10 million people who will now for the first time get the treatment they need without being turned away or fearing how they will pay. I urge you all to match the leadership of these countries with your own support, and I commit the United Kingdom to giving that support.

Let us remember how in 1945, as the United Nations was being created, countries faced a multiplicity of challenges but summoned up the energy and vision not just to rebuild from the ruin and rubble of a war, but to establish a new international order for shared security and progress. I believe that these same principles must now inspire new and better, more representative and more effective ways of cooperating globally together.

And as we learn from the experience of turning common purpose into common action in this our shared global society, so we must forge a progressive multilateralism for this era, one that depends upon us finding within ourselves and together the qualities of moral courage and leadership that for our time and for our generation can make this world anew. I believe that if we take the right decisions and work together, we are in the business of creating for the first time in human history a truly global society. It is a name to be wished for and an aim to be fought for by all of us.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.